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THE MORAL DILEMMA OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Essays from

worldview

A JOURNAL OF RELIGION AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

JOHN COURTNEY MURRAY, S. J.

JULIAN N. HARTT

STEVEN S. SCHWARZSCHILD

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WILLIAM CLANCY, *Editor*

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Preface

This volume is the first collection of essays from *worldview*, the monthly journal of opinion that is now entering its sixth year of publication by the Council on Religion and International Affairs. As these essays are concerned to develop various approaches to a common subject, namely, the moral implications of modern nuclear warfare, they reflect the larger purpose of *worldview*, which is to determine what ethical guides, derived from the body of religious insight that is frequently referred to as "the Judeo-Christian tradition," may be relevant to the problems of politics on an international level. The writers of these essays make no attempt to "solve" the problem of nuclear weapons. They do attempt to engage in a consideration of the role of the statesman as he faces this most crucial and agonizing question, and to evaluate alternatives of thought and action which are, in the words of one of the participants, "morally responsible and politically wise."

This series was inaugurated in the December, 1958 issue of *worldview* and was concluded in the October, 1960 issue. Political scientists, theologians, military analysts and journalists—"realists" and "pacifists"—joined and extended the discussion. As no attempt was made to enforce the more formal rules of debate, some of the participants wrote in direct challenge or response to previous contributions, while others preferred to state an independent viewpoint. The remarks in the section entitled "Postscripts" were contributed especially for publication in this pamphlet and appear here for the first time. A paper delivered at Princeton by George F. Kennan (reprinted in this pamphlet) provided a practicing statesman's views on the relationship of policy and conscience and, as such, was swept into the course of the discussion in *worldview's* pages.

In a sense, the discussion remains open. It could not be otherwise. By publishing these arguments in the form they took, the directors of the Council on Religion and International Affairs hope to indicate how a beginning can be made to a joint examination of this, the great moral issue of our age. For there has been a strange silence on the subject of morality and modern armaments in the United States. There has been a dangerous divorce between the moralists and the makers of the policy. The debate over morality and nuclear weapons has raged in many European countries—notably in Great Britain—but here there exists a widespread apathy which seems to result more from ignorance than from cynicism. The great majority of citizens, it seems, has no notion that any future war carries dangers that were undreamed of in any past war, and the government

has not been concerned to inform them of this fact. Indeed, the discussion so far has often seemed rather academic, far removed from "the world where things really happen."

Unfortunately, the discussion is not so removed, nor can it be finally terminated until some meeting between the twin demands of morality and survival is affected.


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I am grateful to these men for their interest in this project and for their permission to reprint these essays in pamphlet form.

WILLIAM CLANCY

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MORALITY AND MODERN WAR

John Courtney Murray, S.J.

There are three distinct standpoints from which it is possible to launch a discussion of the problem of war in this strange and perilous age of ours that has yet to find its name. My initial assertion will be that it is a mistake to adopt any one of them exclusively and to carry the argument on to its logical conclusion. If this is done, the argument will end in serious difficulties.

First, one might begin by considering the possibilities of destruction and ruin, both physical and human, that are afforded by existent and projected developments in weapons technology. Here the essential fact is that there are no inherent limits to the measure of destruction and ruin that war might entail, whether by the use of nuclear arms or possibly by the methods of bacteriological and chemical warfare.

Carried to its logical conclusion an argument made exclusively from this standpoint leads toward the position that war has become a moral absurdity, not to be justified in any circumstances. In its most respectable form this position may be called relative Christian pacifism.

It does not assert that war is intrinsically evil simply because it is a use of force and violence and therefore a contravention of the Christian law of love promulgated in the Sermon on the Mount. This is the absolute pacifism, the unqualified embrace of the principle of non-violence, that is more characteristic of certain Protestant sects.

The relative pacifists are content to affirm that war has now become an evil that may no longer be justified, given the fact that no adequate justification can be offered for the ruinous effects of today's weapons of war. Even this position is not to be squared with the public doctrine of the Catholic Church.

Second, one might begin the argument by considering the present historical situation of humanity as dominated by the fact of Communism. The essential fact here is that Communism, as an ideology and as a power-system, constitutes the gravest possible menace to the moral and civilizational values that form the basis of "the West," understanding the

The complete text of this essay has been published in pamphlet form by the Council on Religion and International Affairs (formerly The Church Peace Union) in cooperation with the Catholic Association for International Peace.

term to designate, not a geographical entity but an order of temporal life that has been the product of valid human dynamisms tempered by the spirit of the Gospel.

Arguing from this standpoint alone one could well posit, in all logic, the present validity of the concept of the "holy war." Or one might come to some advocacy of "preventive" war or "pre-emptive" war. Or one might be led to assert that, since the adversary is completely unprincipled, and since our duty in face of him is success in the service of civilization itself, we must jettison the tradition of civilized warfare and be prepared to use any means that promises success.

None of these conclusions is morally acceptable.

Third, one might choose as a starting point the fact that today there exists a mode of international organization that is committed by its charter to the preservation of peace by pacific settlement of international disputes. One might then argue that the validity of war even as a legal institution has now vanished, with the passing of the hypothesis under which its legal validity was once defended, namely, the absence of a juridically organized international community.

But this conclusion seems, at very best, too rapid, for several reasons. The United Nations is not, properly speaking, a juridical organization with adequate legal authority to govern in the international community. It is basically a power organization. And its decisions, like those rendered by war itself, are naively apt to sanction injustice as well as justice.

It is not at all clear that the existence of the United Nations, as presently constituted, definitely destroys the hypothesis on which the validity of war as a legal institution has traditionally been predicated.

It is not at all clear that the United Nations, in its present stage of development, will be able to cope justly and effectively with the underlying causes of international disputes today or with the particular situations in which the basic conflict rises to the surface.

If therefore one adopts a single standpoint of argument, and adheres to it narrowly and exclusively, one will not find one's way to an integral and morally defensible position on the problem of war. On the other hand, all of the three standpoints mentioned do derive from real aspects of the problem itself. In consequence, each of them must be exploited, if the problem is to be understood in its full scope.

This is my second assertion. It is not possible here to develop it in detail. I shall merely suggest that there are three basic questions that must be explored at length and in detail. Moreover, there is an order among these questions.

The first question concerns the exact nature of the conflict that is the very definition of international life today. This is the first question be-

cause it sets the perspectives in which all other questions must be considered.

I would note here that Pius XII, in contrast with some other Catholic theorists, has fairly steadily considered the problem of war and of the weapons of war, as well as the problem of international organization, within the perspectives of what he called "the line of rupture which divides the entire international community into opposed blocks," with the result that "coexistence in truth" is not possible, since there is no common acceptance of a "norm recognized by all as morally obligatory and therefore inviolable."

I would further note that the exact nature of the international conflict is not easily and simply defined. The line of rupture is not in the first instance geographic but spiritual and moral, and it runs through the West as well as between East and West.

It cannot be a question of locating on "our" side of the rupture those who are virtuous and intelligent, and, over against "us," those who are evil and morally blind. In contrast, it cannot be a question, as with certain neo-Lutheran theorists, of maintaining that both East and West are so full of moral ambiguities that the line of rupture between them either does not exist or is impossible to discern.

In a word, one must avoid both a moral simplism and a moral nihilism in the analysis of the international conflict.

Finally, it is most important to distinguish, with Dr. William H. Roberts, between the mainsprings of the conflict and its concrete manifestations; or, with Sir David Kelly, between the relatively superficial facts of change in our revolutionary world and the underlying currents of change. Moreover, it is important to relate the two levels of analysis, in so far as this can be done without artificiality.

The tendency of this whole line of analysis will be to furnish a full answer to a complex of questions that must be answered before it is possible to consider the more narrow problem of war.

What precisely are the values, in what hierarchical scale, that today are at stake in the international conflict? What is the degree of danger in which they stand?

What is the mode of the menace itself—in particular, to what extent is it military, and to what extent is it posed by forms of force that are more subtle?

If these questions are not carefully answered, one will have no standard against which to match the evils of war. And terror, rather than reason, will command one's judgments on the military problem.

This is the danger to which the seven moral theologians in Germany pointed in their statement of May 5, 1958: "A part of the confusion among

our people has its source in the fact that there is an insufficient realization of the reach of values that are endangered today, and of the hierarchical order among them, and of the degree of danger in which they stand. On the other hand, from the *Unheimlichkeit* of the technical problems (of war itself) there results a crippling of intelligence and of will."

The second basic question concerns the means that are available for insuring the defense of the values that are at stake in the international conflict. This too is a large and complex question.

A whole array of means is available, in correspondence with the multifaceted character of the conflict itself. It is a matter of understanding both the usefulness and the limitations of each of them, from spectacular "summit meetings" across the gamut to the wholly unspectacular work, say, of agricultural experts engaged in increasing the food supply of so-called underdeveloped nations.

This whole complex question must be fully explored antecedently to the consideration of the problem of war. The basic reason is that otherwise one can give no concrete meaning to the concept of war as *ultima ratio*.

Moreover, the value of the use of force, even as *ultima ratio*, will be either overestimated or underestimated, in proportion as too much or too little value is attached to other means of sustaining and pressing the international conflict.

The third and final question concerns the *ultima ratio* itself, the arbitrament of arms as the last resort.

Here we confront the third uniqueness in the total problem. The historical situation of international conflict is unique: "Never," said Pius XII, "has human history known a more gigantic disorder." The uniqueness of the disorder resides, I take it, in the unparalleled depth of its vertical dimension; it goes to the very roots of order and disorder in the world—the nature of man, his destiny, and the meaning of human history. There is a uniqueness too in the second basic question posited above, sc., the unprecedented scope of the conflict in its horizontal dimension, given the variety of means whereby it may be, and is being, waged.

A special uniqueness resides too in the existence of the United Nations, as an arena of conflict, indeed, but also as an instrument of peacemaking to some degree.

However, the most immediate striking uniqueness comes to view when one considers the weapons for war-making that are now in hand or within grasp.

There are two subordinate questions under this general heading of the nature of war today.

The first concerns the actual state of progress (if it be progress and

not a regress to barbarism) in the technology of defensive and offensive weapons of war. The second concerns the military usefulness, for any intelligible military and political purposes, of the variety of weapons developed; this latter question therefore raises the issue of the strategic and tactical concepts that are to govern the use of these various weapons.

The facts that would furnish answers to these questions are to a considerable extent hidden from the public knowledge; and, to the extent to which they are known, they have been generative of confusion in the public mind. In any case, these questions must have some reasonably satisfactory answer, if the moral problem of war is to be sensibly discussed.

Here then are three preliminary lines of inquiry to be pursued before the moral issues involved in warfare today can be dealt with, even in their generality. I hasten on to my third assertion, sc., that an initial, not necessarily complete, exploration of these three lines is sufficient to suggest the outlines of a general moral theory.

Whether Catholic thought can be content to stop with a moral theory cast simply in the mode of abstractness that characterizes the following propositions will be a further question. In any case, it is necessary in the first instance to state the general propositions.

(1) All wars of aggression, whether just or unjust, fall under the ban of moral proscription.

The use of force (and presumably one would include the threat of force) is not a moral means for the redress of violated legal rights. The justness of the cause is irrelevant; there simply is no longer a right of self-redress; no individual State may presume to take even the cause of justice into its own hands. Whatever the grievance of the State may be, and however objectionable it may find the status quo, warfare is an immoral means for settling the grievance and for altering existent conditions.

(2) A defensive war against unjust aggression is morally admissible both in principle and in fact.

In its abstractness this principle has always formed part of Catholic doctrine; by its assertion the Church finds a sure way between the false extremes of pacifism and bellicism. Moreover, the assertion itself, far from being a contradiction of the basic Christian will to peace, is the strongest possible affirmation of this will.

These are statements of the principles of the traditional doctrine on war. It is not difficult to state them. The difficulty begins after the statement has been made. What is questioned today is the usefulness of the doctrine, its relevance to the concrete actualities of our historical moment.

I think that the tendency to question the uses of the Catholic doctrine

on war initially rises from the fact that it has for so long not been used, even by Catholics. That is, it has not been made the basis for a sound critique of public policies and a means for the formation of right public opinion.

The classic example, of course, was the policy of "unconditional surrender" during the last war. This policy clearly violated the requirement of the "right intention" that has always been a principle in the traditional doctrine of war. Yet no sustained criticism was made of the policy by Catholic publicists or even by Catholic bishops.

Nor was any substantial effort made to clarify by moral judgments the thickening mood of savage violence that made possible the atrocities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

I think it is true to say that the traditional doctrine was irrelevant during World War II. This is no argument against the traditional doctrine. The Ten Commandments do not lose their imperative relevance by reason of the fact that they are violated. But there is place for an indictment of all of us who failed to make the tradition relevant.

The initial relevance of the traditional doctrine today lies in its value as the solvent of false dilemmas. Our fragmentized culture seems to be the native soil of this fallacious and dangerous type of thinking.

There are, first of all, the two extreme positions, a softly sentimental pacifism and a cynically hard realism. Both of these views which are also "feelings" are formative factors in the moral climate of the moment. Both of them are condemned by the traditional doctrine of the Church as false and pernicious.

The problem is to refute by argument the false antinomy between war and morality that they assert in common, though in different ways. The further and more difficult problem is to purify the public climate of the miasma that emanates from each of them and tends to smother the public conscience.

The second false dilemma has threatened to dominate the argument on national defense in Germany. It sloganized itself thus: "*Lieber rot als tot.*" It has made the same threat in England where it has been developed in a symposium by 23 distinguished Englishmen entitled *The Fearful Choice: A Debate on Nuclear Policy*.

The choice, of course, is between the desperate alternatives, either universal atomic death or complete surrender to Communism. The Catholic mind, schooled in the traditional doctrine of war and peace, rejects the dangerous fallacy involved in this casting up of desperate alternatives. Hidden beneath the fallacy is an abdication of the moral reason and a craven submission to some manner of technological or historical determinism.

It is not, of course, that the traditional doctrine rejects the extreme alternatives as possibilities. Anything in history is possible. Moreover, on grounds of the moral principle of proportion the doctrine supports the grave recommendation of the greatest theorist of war in modern times, von Clausewitz: "We must therefore familiarize ourselves with the thought of an honorable defeat."

Conversely, the doctrine condemns the hysteria that swept Washington in 1958 when the Senate voted 82 to 2 to deny government funds to any person or institution who ever proposes or actually conducts any study regarding the "surrender of the government of the U.S."

"Losing," said von Clausewitz, "is a function of winning," thus stating in his own military idiom the moral calculus prescribed by traditional moral doctrine. The moralist agrees with the military theorist that the essence of a military situation is uncertainty. And when he requires, with Pius XII, a solid probability of success as a moral ground for a legitimate use of arms, he must reckon with the possibility of failure and be prepared to accept it.

But this is a moral decision, worthy of a man and of a civilized nation. It is a free and responsible act, and therefore it inflicts no stigma of dishonor.

It is not that "weary resignation," condemned by Pius XII (Christmas Message, 1948), which is basic to the inner attitude of the theorists of the desperate alternatives, no matter which one they argue for or accept. On the contrary, the single inner attitude which is nourished by the traditional doctrine is a will to peace, which, in the extremity, bears within itself a will to enforce the precept of peace by arms.

But this will to arms is a moral will, controlled by reason; for it is identically a will to justice. It is formed under the judgment of reason. And the first possibility contemplated by reason, as it forms the will to justice through the use of force, is not the possibility of surrender, which would mean the victory of injustice. This is the ultimate extremity, beyond even the extremity of war itself.

Similarly, the alternate possibility considered by reason is not a general annihilation, even of the enemy. This would be worse than injustice; it would be sheer folly. In a word, a debate on nuclear policy that is guided by the traditional doctrine of war does not move between the alternatives of surrender or annihilation.

If it means simply an honorable defeat, surrender may be morally tolerable; but it is not to be tolerated save on reasonable calculus of proportionate moral costs. In contrast, annihilation is on every count morally intolerable; it is to be averted at all costs, that is, at the cost of every effort, in every field, that the spirit of men can put forth.

Precisely here the proximate and practical value, use, and relevance of the traditional doctrine begin to appear.

Its remote value lies in its service as a standard of casuistry on various kinds of war and in its general formation of the private and public conscience and of the climate of moral opinion in the midst of today's international conflict. But its proximate value is felt at the crucial point where the moral and political orders meet.

Primarily, its value resides in its capacity to set the right terms for rational debate on public policies bearing on the problem of war and peace in this age, characterized by international conflict and by advanced technology. This is no mean value, if you consider the damage that is being presently done by argument carried on in the wrong terms.

The traditional doctrine disqualifies as irrelevant and dangerous the false dilemmas of which I have spoken. It also rejects the notion that the immediate problem is to "abolish war" or "ban the bomb."

It is true that the traditional doctrine looks forward to its own disappearance as a chapter in Catholic moral theology. The effort of the moral reason to fit the use of violence into the objective order of justice is paradoxical enough; but the paradox is heightened when this effort takes place at the interior of the Christian religion of love.

In any case, the principles of the doctrine themselves make clear that our historical moment is not destined to see the doctrine discarded as unnecessary. War is still the possibility, not to be exorcised by prayer and fasting. The Church does not look immediately to the abolition of war. Her doctrine still seeks to fulfill its triple traditional function: to condemn war as evil, to limit the evils it entails, and to humanize its conduct as far as possible.

In the light of the traditional doctrine and the no less necessary light of the facts of international life and technological development today, what are the right terms for argument on public policy? These are readily reached.

The doctrine asserts, in principle and in fact, that force is still the *ultima ratio* in human affairs, and that its use in extreme circumstances may be morally obligatory *ad repellendam injuriam*. The facts assert that today this *ultima ratio* takes the form of nuclear force.

The doctrine asserts that an unlimited use of nuclear force is immoral. The facts assert that nevertheless the use of nuclear force remains possible and may prove to be necessary, lest a free field be granted to brutal violence and lack of conscience.

The doctrine concludes that the use of nuclear force must be limited, the principle of limitation being the exigencies of legitimate defense against injustice. Thus the terms of public debate are set in two words,

"limited war." All other terms of argument are either fanciful or fallacious.

I shall not attempt to construct the debate itself. But two points may be made.

First, there are those who say that the limitation of nuclear war, or any war, is today impossible, for a variety of reasons—technical, political, etc. In the face of this position, the traditional doctrine simply asserts again, "the problem today is limited war."

But notice that the assertion is on a higher plane than that of sheer fact. It is a moral proposition, or better, a moral imperative. In other words, since nuclear war may be a necessity, it must be made a possibility. Its possibility must be created.

And the creation of its possibility requires a work of intelligence, and the development of manifold action, on a whole series of levels—political (foreign and domestic), diplomatic, military, technological, scientific, fiscal, etc., with the important inclusion of the levels of public opinion and popular education. To say that the possibility cannot be created by intelligence and energy, under the direction of a moral imperative, is to succumb to some sort of determinism in human affairs.

My second point is that the problem of limited war would seem to require solution in two stages.

One stage consists in the construction of a sort of "model" of the limited war. It is largely a problem in conceptual analysis. Its value consists in making clear the requirements of limited war in terms of policy on various levels. Notably it makes clear, for instance, that the limitation of war becomes difficult or impossible if fiscal policy assumes the primacy over military policy.

The second stage is even more difficult. It centers on a *quaestio facti*. The fact is that the international conflict, in its ideological as in its power dimension, comes to concrete expression in certain localized situations, each of which has its own peculiarities. The question then is, where and under what circumstances is the eruption of violence possible or likely, and how is the limitation of the conflict to be effected in these circumstances?

The answer to this question is precisely what is meant by the formation of policy. Policy is the hand of reason set firmly upon events. Policy is what you do in this given situation. In the concreteness of policy therefore the assertion of the possibility of limited war is finally made, and made good.

Policy is the meeting-place of the world of power and the world of morality, in which there takes place the concrete reconciliation of the duty of success that rests upon the statesmen and the duty of justice that rests upon the civilized nation that he serves.

I am thus led to one final comment on the problem of war. It may be that the classical doctrine of war needs more theoretical elaboration in order to relate it more effectively to the unique conflict that agitates the world today, in contrast with the older historical conflicts upon which the traditional doctrine sought to bear, and by which it in turn was shaped.

In any case, another work of the reflective intelligence is even more badly needed. I shall call it a politico-moral analysis of the divergent and particular conflict-situations that have arisen or are likely to arise in the international scene as problems in themselves and as manifestations of the underlying crisis of our times. It is in these particular situations that war actually becomes a problem. It is in the midst of their dense materiality that the *quaestio iuris* finally rises.

To answer it is the function of the moralist, the professional or the citizen moralist. This answer will never be more than an act of prudence, a practical judgment informed by principle. But he can give no answer at all to the *quaestio iuris* until the *quaestio facti* has been answered.

From the point of view of the problem of war and morality the same need appears that has been described elsewhere in what concerns the more general problem of politics and morality. I mean the need of a far more vigorous cultivation of politico-moral science.

RELIGION AND THE BOMB

Julian N. Hartt

In his essay, "Morality and Modern War," John Courtney Murray anatomized several of the central elements of the problem—and he did it in his characteristically clear and coolheaded way. Beyond this, he argued that there is a sane middle ground between the extremes of pacifism and bellicism, and that the health of the nations demands that they occupy this middle ground.

I have no inclination to part company with Father Murray's judiciousness and perceptiveness, in order to traffic either with sentimentalists or with cynics, with those who piously believe that love can dispense with force or with those who scornfully believe that love, and even justice, merely complicate the efficient and decisive use of force in pursuit of national self-interest. Accordingly the questions which I raise here reflect, I hope, great sympathy for the stabilizing and moderating claims of reason, whose voice is too seldom and too impatiently heard in the land in our troubled times.

Where is the salvatory and salubrious middle ground, and what is the access to it? Abstractly, it is plotted between pacifism and bellicism; between life-at-any-price and let's-get-it-over-with; between total war and no war; between unlimited nuclear weaponry development and abolition of all such weaponry. The name for this position is "limited war"; and it is understood that the limits placed upon warfare are imposed by conscience and are enforced by some adequately powerful organization.

So far so good. The problem is how to take and to hold the middle ground for the purposes of policy-formation and policy-enactment. What is forthcoming to instruct the consciences of those who must make policy and those for whom it is made and enacted and who must endure its hazards and its hardships?

Father Murray is wholly right in warning us that conscience is not properly instructed by fear and anxiety. Fear and anxiety are very potent forces, and they vehemently assail the contemporary mind when it is engaged with the harrowing problems of war and survival. They must therefore be rigorously disciplined so that the mind can be adequately empowered and directed by the apprehension of the real good. True. But the truth tempts us to sell short a fact or two, such as the very deep fear that the family of nations is a wolf-pack rather than a human community;

and the fear of having lost sight, and every other sense, of the real good.

Such facts forcibly remind us that efficacious instruction of conscience presupposes a stable community with unquestioned adherence to ultimate ethical principles. In the absence of this community the making and the executing of policy effecting the public welfare is bound to be arbitrary, if not capricious; and is therefore bound to use sub-rational appeals and warrants for its approval.

Then does this community longer exist, this socio-ethical presupposition of policy? Does it survive as a treasured myth and as a moral relic of its once unquestioned principles left in vastly attenuated force as merely expediential counsel?

I do not propose these questions as (merely) rhetorical. Father Murray has not, I believe, clearly enough come to terms with the question behind every serious consideration of limited war as a moral option, i.e., where are the ethical principles to fix the appropriate limits? *Where*, not *what*: can we make out the lineaments of the community which is the living repository (as it were) of the ethical principles relevant and efficacious to the moral determination of the limits of warfare?

There are two answers to such a question. One is to identify that society we call America as that community. Another is to elevate a religious community to the position of ethical monitor and tutor to the commonwealth as a whole. Let us briefly consider these as alternatives.

"America" is certainly a name for a generalized moral attitude, a fact which some home-grown prophets are frequently disposed to under-estimate. It is not, however, an attitude which is capable of illuminating and directing conscience on the formidable question here under discussion. It requires for itself just such treatment in our time. And what is often proposed as that physician and mentor to the American ideal is the Judeo-Christian tradition.

The proposal is barely plausible. "America" is a variant of a cultural synthesis; and Judaism and classical Christianity are components in that synthesis; and the mother which "birthed" America has no great power now to rebuke, chasten, and amend her child. The Judeo-Christian tradition is a memory, not a presently-efficacious conscience. As such it can occasion a residual guilt but hardly the shuddering awe which only the living God can strike into our hearts.

So we consider the living religious communities honored in America as having every right to exist so far as none is pledged to the destruction of the state. Each of these has accommodated itself to the requirements of law and massive sentiment; but each has also persisted in standing out against the cultural synthesis, in a rich variety of ways, running from mild non-concurrence to militant dissidence upon grave occasion. And

here is the rub: policy in behalf of the public welfare can be qualified only marginally by *any* community in the state unless that community, in this case a "Church," can convince the massive sentiment that the best interests of all will thus and not otherwise be served. Really to establish such a claim the spokesmen for the Church must presuppose an intuition of the good at the heart of the massive sentiment, and proceed upon the assumption of the coincidence of that intuition and the ethical traditions of the Church.

Here let us consider what Father Murray calls the traditional teaching of the Christian Church on the morality of war. Unquestionably the tradition makes a solid junction at certain points with the massive sentiment of modern culture in the West, and for the very good reason that both have a common ancestor in classical civilization. But there is also the Gospel. As a Christian I should find it quite literally incredible that the Gospel had not taught Western man something about justice which he could not conceivably have learned from Aristotle; but at the same time I should have to profess that the Higher Righteousness in which Jesus Christ alone can instruct us is open and meaningful only to faith in Him. Jesus Christ comes not with a code of precept and counsel but with the power of God unto forgiveness and absolute transformation. Thus in the "world" of His creation justice itself takes on a meaning impossible to it otherwise.

If this is so, what kind of criticism can the man of Christian faith make of the policies of the man of the world? The question is objectionable if it assumes ideal types, objectionable because highly, if not hopelessly, abstract. But the question need not be so taken. (Indeed, nothing is to be gained save the poison-ivy wreath of self-righteousness by denying the confused mode in which even the most sublimely pious Christian appropriates the Gospel.) We can in good faith make it the question whether the holy weight of the Gospel does not come down on the objectives of policy more clearly and decisively than upon a presumptive identity of ethical presupposition uniting the statesman speaking and working for the massive sentiment and the Christian churchman.

The Gospel has a kind of life in the massive sentiment but it is the life of cultural appropriation. This cultural appropriation has drained off the religious uniqueness of the Gospel in order to make the realization of the Gospel imperatives a purely human possibility. And now the immense power over nature and over man bestowed on human hands creates and richly nourishes the profound illusion of modernity, viz., that we have to render an account only to ourselves. For the time being, vestigial guilt survives for having killed "God," but tomorrow will be a brighter, freer day: no God, no guilt.

Father Murray has rightly called attention to the profound and pervasive moral disorder which embraces Western society. I find it necessary to relate this spiritual sickness somewhat more directly to war than he has done in "Morality and Modern War."

War is yet what it has been for a very long time in Western society, an integral aspect of this culture. However horrible its devastations, no one in a position of considerable power seriously proposes to eliminate it—and for a very compelling reason: elimination of war would strictly entail elimination of certain attitudes and values without which our life would assume an alien cast. It is a "right of nature" to aggrandize oneself at the cost of others, though convention dictates a certain softening, a certain glossing over of this "right" with the pale cast of sentimentality.

Historically this "right" has been more unequivocally imputed to nations than to persons, but not more passionately. But on the other hand, and with equal passion, Western culture in its modern mood has professed that against deliberate imposition of injustice by one State upon another, war is the finally authoritative recourse and redress.

But an important qualification obtrudes on the contemporary mind: unless the resort to force should be self-defeating. This reservation is a focus for great ambiguities and anxieties. Grant that the proximate objective in fighting a war is to win. Now suppose either stalemate or annihilation is the only possible result, given present weapons (to say nothing of weapons yet to come). Can a war on these terms then be justified by appeal to remoter objectives, i.e., justice and national honor? Better to have fought and lost than to have endured supinely the aggrandizement of injustice: as fine a slogan as one could hope to hear, but what does it mean to people who do not believe that they live and must live in a moral community transcending all national boundaries? What does it mean to people who believe that the values and comforts of the democratic West are the only God there is? Nothing is easier, in this state of mind, than to confuse justice with self-interest, and honor with prestige, so thoroughly that their critical distinction becomes impossible.

A significant part of the moral disorder of the West is the fear of destruction visited upon our way of life by "nuclear war." This fear has a religious quality so far as this way of Life is the only imperious God universally acknowledged. A very precarious and creaturely God it is, but it is therefore one whose survival and welfare generate immense and morbid anxiety. And this state of mind seduces honest men into believing that their State ought not to fight unless it is directly attacked, and that when they fight they are under no moral obligation to an actually ex-

isting community embracing all nations and all peoples. There is very little use in holding over their heads traditional moral values and obligations, so long as they are unable or unwilling to acknowledge the metaphysical realities undergirding them.

THEOLOGIANS AND THE BOMB

Steven S. Schwarzschild

In sophisticated theological circles of all religious communions unqualified rejection of war is not even argued against anymore. It is just insulted. The word "pacifists" is apparently never used without the adjective "sentimental," if not worse.

The reason for this attitude is a little difficult to understand. It would seem that there must be more deserving objects of scorn than people who are so revolted by the shedding of human blood that, sometimes perhaps without lengthy casuistic cogitations, they raise their hands heavenward and swear to abstain from all forms of direct or indirect military action.

Let it be granted that such people are unrealistic, utopian, emotional, and all the other faults which are ascribed to them by the hard-headed empiricists of religion. For the sake of the argument, let it be assumed that they are totally wrong and may cause a great deal of harm to the relatively good society which is to be safeguarded by war. Still, from the point of view of religion—which, it may be taken for granted, abhors war even when war is inevitable and necessary—surely in a world haunted by the constant threat of annihilation there must be men and ideologies and institutions and impulses which more properly and greatly merit imprecations and refutations: namely, all those which tend to cause the reality and possibly also the necessity of organized killings.

It is a quality of moral revulsion which one finds lacking in Father John Courtney Murray's "Morality and Modern War." Father Murray would, of course, pray and reason and exert himself for the prevention of war as much as any pacifist, but he is so preoccupied with his taxonomical endeavors in the field of military morality and social catastrophes that in his writing one does not find any sense of what nuclear war really is. The ghastly vision of thousands of charred and disintegrated human bodies is effectively hidden behind elaborate ethical charts. And in his article "Religion and the Bomb" (April 1959), Professor Julian Hartt shows that he does not like pacifists any better, even though he loses control of himself at one point to execrate war and denounce those whose systems of values foster it.

My comments, to be sure, are pretty subjective. But on the subject of nuclear war a large dose of subjectivism is called for. In the first place, unless there be a demand for peace so violent that it will shake the

heavens and thrones of the mighty, the necessary intellectual and social efforts will not be undertaken to ensure peace. And let it not be said again, as is said nowadays invariably when this point in the discussion is reached, that the belief that peace can be ensured is in and of itself idolatrously utopian: we are speaking not of the establishment of the Kingdom of God but only, and modestly, of preventing the outbreak of international atomic warfare.

One must, in the second place, begin one's arguments on this subject with a personal reaction because one has the impression that the proponents of religious realism and of theological permissiveness in regard to "limited war" have heard all the logical arguments against their views and have not been persuaded, even as—contrary to the assumption often made—most "idealists" have listened to and rationally concluded that they must reject the arguments of the realists.

What good will it do to go through the whole roster of considerations once again? Surely Father Murray had previously heard Professor Hartt's question about who can be expected or trusted to define the limits of "limited war" and the specific application of the concepts of aggressive or defensive war. It may be presumed that he has found an answer satisfactory to himself either in philosophical terms or within the authority of the Catholic Church. By the same token, it would not be too difficult to go through Father Murray's tight conceptual development and, approaching it from another perspective, point out its inadequacies. This would do equally little good. He has unquestionably been confronted with all these issues before and has, at least for himself, overcome them.

In other ways, the same probable ineffectiveness of argumentation looms up before Professor Hartt. It is not very easy to understand his ultimate concern. This seems to be that if men do not possess loftier commitments than their own lives they will not be prepared to wage war for any but egotistical goals. But men must be reminded that their egotistical goals will be destroyed by war and that loftier goals than egotistical ones are unattainable through war. And theologians must not ponderously cover under their heavy academic blankets the straightforward divine command to sanctify life, not to abandon it to the powers of human sinfulness.

(One sometimes wonders whether our insistence on theological deepening of religion and life is justified when one observes the contrast between theological subtlety and the uncomplicated, healthy human desire for dignified existence. Under such conditions an appeal to the animalic fear of pain and death and to the untrained, uncritical wish for personal security may be entirely warranted.)

By the time Father Murray has run the course of his argument against

the "twin errors" of pacifism and militarism, the Church is deeper in the business of justifying war than ever before in history. In the past, religious institutions have demanded that war be waged and blessed it while it was taking place, but now more is asked: nuclear war must be made a possibility by, among other things, education under the direction of a moral imperative and by the construction of model limited wars in terms of—presumably theological—conceptual analysis. The next step might be the formation of an Institute for the Theological Formulation of Atomic Military Strategy, known as ITFAMS. Such an Institute would be the logical *reductio ad absurdum* of most contemporary theologizing on the problem of war.

The trouble with most of our thinking on this question is that we have looked at Mars through the wrong end of the telescope, and therefore pacifists have shown up as small sentimental fools. We have assumed that human sinfulness is a given, determined quantity; that any attempt to reduce this quantity constitutes arrogance and self-idolization; and that, therefore, the practice of virtue must be fitted into the existing, unchangeable framework of sin. War, it is believed, is part of this permanent character of unredeemed human existence, and from this premise follow all these desperate and torturous endeavors to reconcile the realities of religion and war with one another.

Turn the telescope around, and you lose none of the objects in the picture: sin is not thereby optimistically and deceptively denied; the power of evil is not thereby denigrated; the real dangers which exist in the world are not overlooked; and the possibility of war is not thereby magically blown away. But instead of positing sinfulness as a given, dogmatic, metaphysical reality to which we must submit, it is transformed into what the philosophers call a limiting concept. It comes at the end of goodness, when goodness cannot go any further, when goodness is frustrated—not before goodness has been tried, not *a priori* telling goodness where and how far it can go.

And if virtue could not crash the barrier of sin yesterday, then today it may succeed, for neither virtue nor sin is a given quantity; rather are they dynamic realities which grow and wane, and thus the war that may have been unavoidable yesterday may be preventable today. Which of them is stronger at any given point in history can be determined, not by philosophic calculations or by theological statistics, but only by the grace of God and by man's moral strength.

The distinction between offensive and defensive war is, of course, a very old one. Jewish law makes another fundamental distinction between "commanded wars" and "permitted wars." Commanded wars are those which the Bible describes as divinely ordered, against the seven ab-

original Palestinian peoples and the Amalekites. But this very law also long ago "historicized" this commandment, placed it in the closed chapter of the past without any possible bearing on the present: these nations no longer exist, and therefore commanded wars are no longer conceivable.

Just the same, even retroactively and against strong judicial opposition, Maimonides toned down the commandment of obligatory war by permitting it only if the enemy had explicitly refused to accept the duties of the minimal moral law incumbent upon all human beings. As for "permitted wars," that is, wars to be decided upon by human considerations, they may be entered into only with the permission of the great Sanhedrin of seventy-one members, and thus, at least for Jewish purposes, also this category of wars has become a mere memory since the Sanhedrin has in effect become unconstitutible.

"Limited wars" of which the tacticians and now also the theologians speak were the only ones which even in Biblical days were regarded as conceivable in the first place. Let anyone try to wage any kind of war these days and yet, taking the Bible seriously, adhere to the limitations there laid down—sparing all women and children, fruit trees and water springs, keeping one line of withdrawal open for the enemy by which he may save himself, exempting the newly married and those who have embarked on new constructive enterprises from military service, and sending home all those who declare not that they have scruples against bearing arms but that they are afraid! Who is not afraid? Why, not only trees and streams, the very air we breathe is homicidally polluted even before we have begun the war!

Religion may not be able to prevent war, although this is far from proved since it has never been tried, but it can in turn at least refuse to sanction it and thus establish standards toward which to strive. The minimum, however, that can be demanded from the theologians is that they cease belaboring the few pacifists and address themselves a little more to the question of how far religion can make compromises with existing conditions and still remain the hard command of God.

A WORLD WITHOUT WAR

John Cogley

War ceased to be a logical enterprise when it passed beyond the simple dimensions of aggression and defense. There was indeed a perverse logic in the actions of those who took up arms in order to seize what did not belong to them—the logic of the criminal; and certainly there was a logical basis for the reaction of those attacked when they decided to meet force with force and refused to give up what was rightfully theirs. But as time went on and international politics became more complex, war began to be thought of as a way to decide which of two disputants had justice on his side. With that development, war lost its intrinsic logic, for war can never determine who is right; it can only determine who is stronger. Throughout history aggressors and scoundrels have walked off with war's victories, and even when the righteous have triumphed it has not been at all clear that they triumphed because they were righteous. The outcome of World War II, for instance, did not prove that Hitler was wrong and the Allies right, no more than a Nazi victory would have proved the opposite.

To say all this, however, is not to say that World War II was bereft of logic, because, like all idea-wars, once the fateful step was taken, the contest soon developed into an aggressor-and-defender war. Those who fought it do not, a decade and a half after it was brought to a close, feel that they acted irrationally. They tend, rather, to think of Nazism as an aggressive force that had to be stopped and see their role in the war not as armed ideologues meeting rival ideologues but as defenders of national integrity, property and human life resisting by force those who were on a rampage of destruction. Even the ideological Russians put their dogma aside for the duration and inspired the Red troops with thoughts of Holy Russia and the sanctity of the homeland. And American troops, thousands of miles from home, were told unceasingly that if Hitler triumphed, Akron and San Pedro, Brooklyn and Detroit would be in mortal danger. Moreover, they believed what they were told. They still do.

And this general satisfaction that the U.S. did right to help win the second World War is one reason, I think, why contemporary pacifism has so little appeal for us. Despite the monstrous weapons of modern war, pacifism is less acceptable now than it was in the 1920's and '30's. I think this is due, in no little measure, to the fact that the very thought of a

Hitler victory, all these years later, still suggests more horror than can be elicited by even the liveliest memory of the war's anguish.

It is no love of violence, then, that keeps even religious men out of the pacifist's camp; rather it is their recent experience with totalitarian evil and the conviction that, if gone unchecked, it could have resulted in even greater evil, in malice beyond our most perfervid imaginings, as indeed the sight of the piled-up bodies found in the concentration camps after the war exceeded the rhetoric of the most bellicose orator.

In a word, most of us are hopelessly convinced that pacifism provided no answers for our confrontation with the Nazi evil unleashed in September, 1939. We do not regret that we turned a deaf ear to the pacifist call then, and we have no greater confidence in its adequacy today.

This is not to say, of course, that the pacifists might not have been right then or that the evil involved in the crushing of Nazism might not actually weigh more heavily on the moral scale than the evil an unchecked Nazism would have led to. But most of us are not convinced of this and believe that the world, for all its present woes, is still better off than it would be if Nazism had not been crushed.

Even those of us who question pacifist theory, however, must now begin to think about pacifism—or at least must think about something that might easily be mistaken for pacifism though in truth it has no claim to that honorable name.

We must begin to think of living in a world without war. With the development of modern weapons, war has lost its last semblance of logic and there is no reason under the sun why mankind should ever again resort to it. In past wars men may have cried, "Give me liberty or give me death." What they meant was, "I am willing to die in order that those I am defending may live." But modern war means that the defended will die as surely as the defenders; It means that nothing will remain for the aggressors to grab. The idea-war, with the change in technology, must rest on its own logic; it can not take its impetus from the aggressor-and-defender war which it inevitably turned into, in the past. And the irreducible fact is this: there is no inherent logic in the idea-war—it simply makes no sense; it never did.

What we must begin to reckon with, then, is the idea that technology has succeeded in doing what all the wit and piety of the moralists through the ages failed to do: it has utterly eliminated the logic of war. When that fact really sinks in, war may disappear from the face of the earth.

The idea that war has lost its last claim to logic is sinking in, though the process, of course, is slow, maddeningly, dangerously slow. But at least men the world over are gradually digesting the crude facts of the situation: when the next war is finished there will be nothing for anybody

to want. The notion of Victory no longer makes sense. There is only defeat and, as George Kennan has reminded us, the real defeat is the war itself, for it involves a common fate which will be visited on all who have anything to do with it.

If this simple fact of life is not universally accepted now, it surely will be after the next war. The question facing us, then, is whether intelligence or frightful experience will set the clock. Will mankind make its decision about war before or after it has been conclusively, and tragically, demonstrated?

I hold that this is the actual state of affairs. Moreover, I claim that it is known to military leaders and heads of state the world over. Yet we and the Russians continue to build armaments ever more horrible. That does not make much sense, does it?

Yet I must admit that there may be no more sensible way to proceed at the present time. Military disarmament is unthinkable until disarmament is politically possible, and disarmament will not be politically possible until the facts of modern war are universally recognized and universally acted on. That at best will be a slow, gradual process.

It will indeed be precariously slow, so slow that one can sympathize with the proponents of "limited warfare," who, with more faith in human intelligence and in moral resolve than I can summon, want to restore the status quo ante as a product of decision rather than of scientific fact. One can also find understanding for those earnest advocates of nuclear "sanity," who sound to me like social workers running up and down the corridors of a mental hospital demanding order. But I see real dangers in both movements. The first wants to delay mankind's decision about renouncing war; the second wants to rush it. Rushing it may be the more precarious, for if the decision is prematurely recognized and acted on before it truly is the decision of mankind evil consequences of unimagined scope may result.

On a matter like this, mankind can neither be delayed nor rushed. It will act as it always does, slowly and gradually. There will be no day on which all men will agree to find a substitute for war. But if tragedy can be averted in the meantime, the day will come when mankind will realize that it has found one.

Evil spawns evil and the substitute men find for war may have terrors for the world as horrible in their own way as those begotten of war. I can not tell you what they will be; I can only await them with a goodly measure of trepidation. But in any case, even on that day when war is gone, I suspect that pacifism, understood not as the absence of war but as a thing of the Spirit, an Evangelical response to aggression, will still be a minority position.

If we try to rush that day, we may bring down upon ourselves the cataclysm we all fear, for while we are doomed to await a greater awareness of the technological facts of life and more determination among governments to recognize them, we must admit that only the arms balance can keep us out of war. But the longer we live with this precarious balance, as everyone knows, the more dangerous our situation—and the more possibility there is that a single false political move, an uncertain military gesture, even the much-discussed misreading of the radar screen, will set off World War III.

Because I believe all this is true, I have no answers to offer, and the answers of others usually strike me as either fatuous moralizing or wishful thinking. All I can say is that we must get used to living in the age of terror that we find ourselves in; at the same time we must learn to live in it as if the terror did not exist. Those who cry havoc do not serve us well, no more than those who cry peace, peace when there is no peace.

When George Kennan told students at the Princeton Theological Seminary that in the long run we have no choice but to throw ourselves on the mercy of God, he was not, as I understood him, crying out his despair, nor was he retreating into mysticism. On the contrary, I take it that his statement grew out of a recognition, based on a shrewd analysis of the present situation, that mankind might yet be saved, if through the mercy of God we are protected from fatal political folly, military stupidity and even such accidents as the misreading of the radar screen. From such dangers as these, however, we have nowhere to turn but to Heaven.

If we survive the dread possibilities that now hang over us and finally realize that war has been outmoded, the proximate cause of our salvation will surely be that same Science which planned our destruction; the ultimate Cause—men of faith may acknowledge—will be the God of History who, in a manner of speaking, has always seemed to have a special fondness for irony.

WAR AS A MORAL PROBLEM

Walter Millis

As one of a non-religious (some of my friends might consider it an anti-religious) bent, it has always seemed to me impossibly difficult to deal with questions of war and statecraft as moral problems. If we are thinking of "war" in the abstract, we are thinking of one of the ugly facts of life—an institution which has characterized human society from time immemorial, and which, like many other ugly facts of life, is in itself morally neutral. Like pain, pestilence or natural disaster, it presents a problem to the moralist; but the moralist can say nothing to those involved in war's agonies and cruel decisions.

If we are talking about war in this abstract sense, it seems to me that only the absolute pacifists—those whom Father Murray too harshly describes as harboring the "vulgar pacifism of sentimentalist and materialist inspiration"—are entitled to introduce the moral issue at all. It is their position that the organized taking of human life is in itself so great an evil that *no* good which may be achieved by this means can render it a moral action. They make a moral issue of the institution of war itself (it must be admitted that a vast amount of history which is neither sentimental nor materialist tends to support them); and it seems to me that those unwilling to meet them on these high terms, those unable either to accept or refute their contention that all war is and of itself immoral, are forced to drop the whole moral argument to a lower plane.

Unless we take our stand with the absolute pacifist, we are compelled to accept war in the abstract as a fact of life. Confronting it, we can no longer appeal to a set of moral absolutes. The whole argument shifts and tends to get lost in the sands and shoals of particular wars, particular circumstances, and the particular moral responsibilities carried by the individual in each of the many ways in which he is related to the social enterprise. It is clear that the aviators who dropped the atomic bomb on the defenseless women and children of Hiroshima, the statesmen who gave the orders that they should do it, and the publicists and politicians who created the "climate" in which the statesmen's decision was made inevitable, all occupied different ethical positions and confronted different moral problems. If one accepts war of some kind, in some circumstances, waged in some degree of savagery, as a moral enterprise, then one is involved in these complexities of individual moral responsibility. One can-

not make the same answer to the individual conscientious objector, taught to believe that the taking of life is inherently wrong, as one makes to the statesman, taught to believe that his highest duty is the conservation of the safety and interest of the people to whom he is responsible, or to the publicist who advocates war or warlike courses (in which it is improbable that he will either have to kill others or risk being killed himself) because he believes that war will serve some higher end of freedom or justice.

From these difficulties, which confront those who reject the position of the absolute pacifists, those who might be described as absolute bellicists offer a logical, if unattractive, way out. If the cause is just, war is not only licit but morally required; one not only may but must fight for the right, and it follows that any kind of horror or violence that carries some reasonable chance of victory and will more quickly terminate the struggle is morally acceptable. This is the logic of the greater good. It was the logic of those who supported war against what seemed the positive evil of Nazi, Fascist and Japanese aggression; it was also the logic which led such patently ethical men as Truman, Stimson and their advisers to incinerate the innocent non-combatants of Hiroshima in the nuclear fires. As John Cogley observes, most of us still feel that the war on Nazism was a morally justified enterprise—it was better to have fought that evil, even at the price of a slaughter, than to have acquiesced in it. But many of us still feel qualms about the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombs, and, indeed, about the equally terrible and indiscriminate Tokyo and Hamburg fireraids.

We recoil from such consequences of the bellicist theory of the greater good, logical though they may be. And we recoil the more because all experience has taught us that no man (or nation) can be trusted unilaterally to determine what is the greater good; no man can be judge in his own cause; no nation in defending its right can be sure that it is not unjustly trampling upon the rights of others; in fighting for what is right against what is evil it cannot know that its values are universal values. It cannot even be sure that military victory will conserve even its own concept of the right—and a great deal of history suggests that this is seldom the actual result. In the absence of a supra-national or super-human authority which can not only ascertain but unambiguously declare what is right and just in the affairs of nation-states, the bellicist theory (and I hope it is clear that I am thinking of bellicism *in a just cause*) offers us no exit from such contrasting difficulties as those of Hiroshima or of our acceptance of war against Germany and Japan.

For those unable to condemn organized war as always and in itself immoral, there is only one solution. It is the solution adopted by Father Murray which, as Rabbi Schwarzschild points out, is no different in es-

sence from that adopted by the ancient Jews and by all later heirs of the Judeo-Christian ethic. War is morally acceptable only under certain rigid limits—limits as to purpose, ends and means. Pope Pius XII (and Father Murray, who so tightly expounds his teaching) discerns limitations different from those which surrounded war in ancient Palestine, but the principle is the same. The case can be put by saying that the politician and publicist are justified in advocating war, the statesman is justified in accepting and waging war, and the soldier is justified in the killing necessary to success, if the origins and conduct of the war fulfill certain conditions.

The conditions are that it must be a just war, by the best lights available to those who participate in it. It must in addition be a defensive war; however just one's claims against others, they are not to be asserted by an organized military effort to establish them; a *defensive* war to repress injustice is permissible, but an offensive war for the same purpose is not. (This seems to rule out a military effort by the West in support of the Hungarian revolution.) The defense must be *efficacious*, "undertaken with hope of success." This limitation, particularly salient in the nuclear age, rules out suicidal last stands; but the application of this latter principle to nuclear weaponry, which appears to offer no hope of defensive success, only of revenge, is obscure. After these limitations on the purposes and ends of legitimate war, one comes to the crucial question of means. Father Murray offers the "principle of proportion." Even grave injustices may not be repressed by disproportionate military means—by means, that is, which would do greater damage than the continuation of the injustice.

However tight and sound the principles, they do not seem to help us much in our problem. The Pope was willing to consider the liceity of megaton warfare "in the case in which it must be judged indispensable for self-defense." But on the other hand, he rejected as "immoral" the use of megaton and bacteriological warfare where it "entails such an extension of the evil that it entirely escapes from the control of man." We are faced with a situation in which *any* war seems likely to escape entirely from the control of man (and I believe that we have in fact been faced with this situation since 1914) and one in which the resort to nuclear weapons can never be "indispensable to self-defense," since, so far as we know now, *resort* to the weapons can never promote defense. Maintaining them may do so, but using them can apparently promote nothing but a barren revenge and destruction.

It is this paradox of the modern weapons which I feel Father Murray avoids. I am quite willing to accept the traditional position that war waged for righteous ends, with limited purposes and by limited means,

with its unavoidable slaughter adjusted in correct proportion to the good which will be achieved by success, is a moral activity. Some of the terms are here rather hard to fill, but the rules or limits as defined seem to me acceptable, and I am not prepared to condemn the soldiers and sailors of, say, the eighteenth century, who did their bloody duty in an age in which this kind of rule and limit was both applicable and observed, as wicked or immoral men. My difficulty is that the rules are no longer applicable. Neither Pope Pius XII nor Father Murray supplies me with an answer to the one rather stark question: Was it right or wrong to incinerate sixty thousand non-combatant men, women and children at Hiroshima? Was President Truman (who bore the ultimate responsibility) a wicked man; was he a good man mistakenly adopting a wicked course, or was he a good man adopting a course which was good, under all the circumstances?

Father Murray's argument does not tell me. His quotations from Pope Pius XII do not tell me; and if my conscience required me (as it does not) to accept the Pope as a final authority on morals, I still think I would be left in a situation of considerable bafflement. This is what I meant by saying at the outset that it has always been difficult for me to deal with issues of statecraft and war as moral issues. My own belief is that the issues which modern war raises before us will be settled on practical rather than moralistic terms. John Cogley has suggested that we are in fact facing the prospect of a world without war, and we will slowly adjust ourselves to a situation (it will by no means be an easy one) derived from pragmatic and not moralistic considerations. With this I agree, as it seems to me the only outcome short of total catastrophe. But if this is the outcome, it will be the moralists who will have to bring their views into accord with it. It will not come through the great society bringing its actions into accord with the teachings of the moralists.

THE PACIFIST'S CHOICE

Stephen G. Cary

Ever since the time of Constantine, Christian theologians have been trying to find a way to wrap up the gospel of Christ and the institution of war in the same package. Sometimes they have enjoyed moderate success. When war was the private monopoly of various princes and was conducted according to well-defined rules with limited objectives, it was possible to rationalize it. But as the institution has grown in scope and ferocity, and its weapons in destructive power, the task has become more difficult. The ethic of love and the ICBM are simply not compatible, regardless of the theological garb in which they are presented.

Yet the Church, rightly concerned with the problem of justice, cannot let go of the notion that the only way justice can be assured is through the amassing of military power. This being so, it must continue the struggle to justify it, however tortuous and winding the road may be. None but the most hardy attempts any longer to bless full-blown, full-megaton nuclear war. The more manageable concept of limited war appears to offer some way out, and Father John Courtney Murray's article represents a brilliant attempt to establish it. His pleas for a restatement of the traditional position of the Church regarding the conditions under which it can support war is an appealing one, and his delineation of the role of the moralist in providing the necessary framework of restraint is admirably logical.

But it seems to me that even Father Murray fails in his task. Dr. Hartt, Rabbi Schwarzschild and, more recently, Walter Millis, have all raised grave doubts about his thesis, and they are doubts that I share. To talk of limited war in the atomic age is to try to turn back the clock. When survival is at stake, as it would be in any major war, it appears the height of folly to talk of applying reason to the situation. War's necessity is terrible and, once released, its course lies almost wholly beyond the compass of those who seek to make it the servant of their ends. To suggest that it is possible to control it requires a rosier view of human nature than I am able to support. One is therefore driven to the conclusion that limited war offers no hiding place for the moralist; if so, there seems to be no other course for the Church but the final rejection of war as an instrument for achieving justice.

One other possible escape hatch does, however, remain: the concept

of armament as a deterrent. Can the Church justify the amassing of military power on the ground that the *threat* of its use will prevent the greater evil of Soviet aggression? There is no doubt that a strong moral case can be built for accepting the necessity for military power if it prevents war and if the time thereby gained can be used to work for the achievement of justice. Politically too, the deterrent concept has solid support. George Kennan, the father of containment, leaned heavily on it in suggesting that the United States develop a shield of strength to deter aggression at the same time that it sought through various positive approaches to eliminate the sources of conflict and lift the level of human life and dignity. This dual concept has in fact been at the root of our foreign policy ever since 1947.

Finally, there is good historical precedent for such an approach. The British employed a similar policy with striking success during much of the last century, using their navy as a shield (and occasionally as an instrument of conquest) at the same time that they advanced democratic freedoms and human welfare at home and, to a certain extent, abroad. Pacifists could inveigh against this use of power, but they were hard put to it to support their case on grounds other than the pure teaching of the gospels. Logic and history were on the side of the realists, and the theologian could answer convincingly that the benefits to man outweighed the evil that might be involved in the application of military power.

Unfortunately, however, we are no longer living in the nineteenth century, and this historical precedent, as well as the theological and political framework that sustains its modern counterpart, rests on assumptions that in my judgment are no longer valid. The whole case depends on the possibility of simultaneously providing military security with one hand while we work for the achievement of peace and justice with the other. I suggest that this cannot now be done. The advances in science have changed fundamentally the nature of security demands, and in a world in which power is both polarized and limitless the old rules and the old assumptions no longer apply. Military and strategic considerations will not stay neatly compartmentalized as they once would. Their demands are becoming pervasive and all-engulfing, to the point where every important national decision must be taken in their terms.

This is what has been happening during the past decade. Where, during this period, has the United States been able to make its important foreign policy decisions on the basis of justice or human welfare? Where is the limited use of power that George Kennan counseled in advocating his twin-pillared program? In area after area—Europe, North Africa, the Middle East, South East Asia, Japan, China—we have been driven by the relentless demands of the Cold War to make our choices in strategic

terms. Economic policies, involving aid programs and world trade, have been dominated by military considerations. So has our policy toward the United Nations. The image of America in the eyes of the world has unhappily changed from that of champion of the oppressed to military giant, and we are bewildered because we have meant only to serve the ends of justice.

This is our dilemma, and it goes much deeper than the intentions or the competence of our leadership. It goes to the question of choice—choice between continuing to seek security in our capacity to destroy, or seeking it through developing our capacity to change. It is perhaps a reflection of our times that the choice is forced on us by logic and history rather than by morality, but the theologian no less than the rest of us must face it, for there appears to be no refuge in deterrence any more than in nuclear war, limited or otherwise.

It is a hard choice, involving the ultimate rejection of violence, but it is the only way to be free of the crippling limitations imposed by commitment to the bomb. Once made, it provides a new basis for day-to-day decisions, and adds another voice to a minority calling for a new approach to foreign relations. This is its political relevance, for change in America is not produced by fiat but by the ever-shifting interaction of diverse interest groups. The pacifist minority, like any other, is politically important because it serves as a pole of discussion through which it has a voice in the ultimate determination of policy. Obviously its influence is modest, but the vigor and depth of its commitment provide a dynamic for change that is lacking in middle-of-the-road approaches. Is it possible that the bankruptcy of liberalism today is due at least in part to the fact that the liberal still clings to the idea that defense programs and welfare programs can be carried on together, with the result that he contributes not to change but only to the schizophrenia of our times?

Of course, a rejection of violence does not in itself release us from our problems. We must still recognize the reality of evil, and discover how to deal with it in a way that preserves our values. It is somehow assumed that these questions do not concern the pacist, that his position represents abandonment of values and abject surrender to evil. Father Murray eschews both nuclear war and pacifism because "these desperate alternatives [mean] either universal death or complete surrender to Communism." The pacifist does not propose to surrender, and he is well aware that power is necessary in this world, but he seeks to develop a conception of power appropriate for our Christian purposes and our nuclear times. He believes that organized, disciplined good will can be both a massive instrument for justice and a potent weapon of defense, as indeed it has become in the hands of a Gandhi or a Martin King. Men are

not saints; neither are they devils. To suggest that they could rise to the challenge of non-violent resistance on the one hand or be moved by it on the other is not to look through rose-colored glasses. Is it so impossible to conceive of man, still nasty to his neighbor, still on occasion beating his wife, but reacting with horror to the suggestion that he launch a missile to destroy a million lives? Our problem lies in the ironic fact that today the general rule is just the opposite.

My plea for men of conscience to face at last the necessity for a personal rejection of war is made without any hope that it offers a panacea. The pacifist must recognize the possibility of invasion, just as the non-pacifist must recognize the possibility that he may have to *use* the bomb—and both must decide how they would face these ultimate failures. The pacifist must admit that he has no answer when the fire breaks out, but he can logically argue that no one else has either.

These arguments only emphasize the fact that the pacifist, like other men, can only see a little way down the road. Politically, he insists only that there is more creative potential and less risk in massive efforts to secure justice than in massive efforts to secure military power, and since he believes a choice must be made between them he is compelled to throw his individual weight on the side of justice. He rests his case there, with the suggestion that the time to start making a new approach is now, and the place to start is with ourselves. He thinks the Church would more adequately fulfill its mission in these tragic times if it abandoned the impossible search for a moral justification for militarism, and turned its attention to discovering alternative sources for national security. When a society reaches the kind of impasse in which ours finds itself today—when it talks about “safety as the twin brother of annihilation” and would betray its values in the name of protecting them—salvation is not to be gained by more calculation of expediency but by rebirth.

FACTS, CALCULATION AND POLITICAL ETHICS

Ernest W. Lefever

George F. Kennan has given some advice to moralists concerned with nuclear weapons and international politics.* Much of his advice is good. He warns against "pouring Christian enthusiasm into unsuitable vessels . . . designed to contain the earthly calculations of practical politicians." His lucid statement on the limits of the United Nations and foreign economic aid can help provide the basis for morally responsible support of these widely misunderstood foreign policy instruments. His comments on the moral ambiguities in the colonialism issue are timely.

But when Mr. Kennan deals with nuclear weapons and bomb tests, he falls into the very legalism and moral absolutism he denounces so effectively when he analyzes the UN, foreign aid and colonialism. Perhaps the chief reason for this contradiction is his ambiguous attitude toward calculation in world politics. Pointing to "the irony that seems to rest on the relationship between intentions of statesmen and the results they achieve," Mr. Kennan concludes that the statesman "is best off when he is guided by firm and sound principles instead of depending exclusively on his own farsightedness and powers of calculation." If it is difficult for the statesman to calculate with assurance, how much more difficult it is for the "Christian onlooker."

Mr. Kennan understands the limits of human calculation in politics, but he fails to recognize its possibilities. He seems to overlook the fact that calculation is both a political and moral necessity. Calculation is the rational process by which men relate human and material resources to their goals. Calculation is the life blood of politics and the heart of ethics. Calculation is the bridge between the given and the desired, between facts and dreams.

Some moralists have attempted to bridge the gulf between political necessity and high moral principle by "middle axioms" or practical rules which can guide the citizen or statesman in relating the *is* to the *ought*. But who really believes there are laws or axioms for every occasion? And if there were, who would know which one to apply?

Even "simple" human problems such as rearing a four-year-old child are too complex to be handled by a legal sliderule. A mother must take

* See Appendix.

many calculated risks every day as she attempts to anticipate the probable effect of alternative lines of action on the character of her child and on the serenity of her household. Perhaps a calculated risk is a better risk than an uncalculated risk.

If calculation is a necessity in child rearing, it is an even greater necessity in the incredibly more complex business of world politics. Yet, Mr. Kennan advises "the government," apparently as a political and moral alternative to calculation, to use "good methods" rather than "bad ones." He says we can be "as sure that the good methods will be in some way useful as that bad ones will be in some way pernicious." A government should be guided by "firm and sound principles instead of depending exclusively" on its "powers of calculation." "A government can pursue its purpose in a patient and conciliatory and understanding way, respecting the interests of others and infusing its behavior with a high standard of decency and honesty and humanity . . . sheer good manners will bring some measure of redemption to even the most disastrous undertaking." What help are Mr. Kennan's manners and principles to a statesman wrestling with the recurrent Berlin crisis? How could they have helped the South Koreans when their country was attacked in 1950?

If Mr. Kennan has not confused manners and morals, it seems clear that he has confused manners with policy—a dangerous error for a person in a position of responsibility. In politics the substance of the response counts most. The manner of the response may be important, but it is not a substitute for policy.

Principles, goals and values are inescapably involved in all political decisions. The principles may be good or bad, the goals worthy or unworthy, the values enduring or ephemeral. These intangible ingredients are present in every political act whether the actor is a Hitler, a Khrushchev, or an Eisenhower. No statesman can make policy from principles alone. He must relate goals and ideals to the political facts of life. This means calculation. And calculation is the foundation of strategy and tactics—policy.

Incidentally, Jesus of Nazareth apparently assumed that statesmen had a moral obligation to calculate, to analyze the balance of power between two hostile camps. "Or what king, going to encounter another king in war, will not sit down first and take counsel whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? And if not, while the other is yet a great way off, he sends an embassy and asks terms of peace." (Luke 14:32, 33.)

The simple fact is that Mr. Kennan does not follow his own advice. He makes particular policy proposals for particular problems and he bases his proposals on calculation. His controversial "disengagement" pro-

posals for easing tension in Europe and his more recent implied proposals for ending nuclear tests were not based on moral maxims alone. They emerged from a rational attempt to relate facts to values, which certainly included a calculation of the probable consequences of competing policies.

The larger fact is that everyone instinctively makes moral-political calculations when dealing with world politics. The real issue is not: shall we calculate or shall we not? The real question is: what factors shall we take into account when we calculate and what weight shall we give them when we make policy?

Sir Winston Churchill once said that "facts are better than dreams." What he meant is that neither the statesman nor the citizen can make politically wise and morally responsible judgments by consulting only his goals. He must consult the facts—the universal facts about man and history, and the particular facts about a political situation. The dream without the fact leads to this-worldly nightmares or to other-worldly escape. The fact without the dream leads to boredom and despair.

Mr. Kennan's nonchalant attitude toward facts and calculation in the area of nuclear weapons leads to less than adequate moral and political judgments. This same nonchalance has crept into some of the previous essays in *worldview* on the same subject.

After quoting a "random sampling" of press reports on the dangers of nuclear fallout, Mr. Kennan concludes: "But whoever gave us the right, as Christians, to take even one innocent life?" His implied judgment that all bomb tests under all circumstances are morally wrong seems to be based in part upon a picture of fallout danger that bears little resemblance to the findings of leading research institutions here and abroad.

Earlier contributors to this debate in the pages of *worldview* have also made rather unqualified generalizations about the destructiveness of nuclear weapons. John Cogley says: "Modern war means that the defended will die as surely as the defenders; it means that nothing will remain for the aggressors to grab." Walter Millis seems to share the same view: "We are faced with a situation in which *any* war seems likely to escape entirely from the control of man . . . so far as we know now, *resort* to [nuclear weapons] can never promote defense." Stephen G. Cary says: "To talk of limited war in the atomic age is to try to turn back the clock. When survival is at stake . . . it appears the height of folly to talk of applying reason to the situation. War's necessity is terrible and, once released, its course lies almost wholly beyond the compass of those who seek to make it a servant of their ends." He adds: "To suggest that it is possible to control it requires a rosier view of human nature than I am able to support."

(Apparently Mr. Cary seems to overlook the fact that control and restraint in international politics, and human relations generally, do not depend mainly on the "goodness of men" but rather on a balance of forces and interests among sinful men. Both the Communists and the United States showed great restraint in the Korean War. Neither side used atomic weapons. The Communists did not use submarines and we did not bomb beyond the Yalu River. Apparently it was in the interest of both sides to exercise restraint. Is it too much to suggest that in a future conflict, even in this nuclear age, there may be important factors on both sides which in the name of prudence, even expediency, make for restraint? To suggest this is a possibility does not imply a "rosy" view of man. Rather it acknowledges that God can make the self-interest of hostile nations to praise Him.)

These four men and many other morally concerned persons tend to expect the worst in the event of serious hostilities and they tend to exaggerate that worst. It is important to consider soberly the findings of respected research institutions.

According to the best projections available the *maximum* possible loss of life from a general nuclear war involving the full present capacities of the Soviet Union and the United States would be about twenty percent of the earth's population. The number killed might well be considerably less. There would be practically no casualties of any kind south of the equator. If the United States had a comprehensive fallout shelter program in operation, eighty million or more additional American lives probably would be saved. These estimates include persons killed by blast and radioactivity.

Among the eighty percent who would survive such a war, the natural genetic damage to the human race might be doubled in areas of heavy fallout. Any injury is always an individual tragedy. But genetic damage resulting from tests or from general war or both, like the number of automobile deaths in the United States, is well within the range of what a civilized society is prepared to tolerate.

Every human life is precious in the eyes of God, and even one innocent death or crippling disease is one too many. Any decent human being recoils from the horror of a lynching or a nuclear war. We are all agreed here.

The problem we are concerned with as American citizens is what national security policy the United States should pursue. Faced with the possibility of a catastrophic nuclear holocaust on the one hand and a dynamic and expansionist Sino-Soviet bloc on the other, shall we recommend a radical change in our present foreign policy?

Many pacifists and neo-pacifists say we should. My comments are di-

rected primarily to the neo-pacifists who insist that we are confronted by an entirely new situation as a result of the technological revolution. Mr. Cogley says: "We must begin to think of living in a world without war. With the development of modern weapons, war has lost its last semblance of logic." Mr. Kennan says: "I am skeptical of the meaning of 'victory' and 'defeat' in their relation to modern war between great countries." Today, says Mr. Cary, "the old rules and the old assumptions no longer apply."

The assumption that we are in a radically new situation, upon which these appraisals are made, is itself subject to question. I would hold that the basic realities of politics among sovereign states have more in common with previous eras than they have differences. The main elements then and now are the visions, interests and demands of morally ambiguous men projected from the vantage point of national power. The new element is technological, but even the drastic discontinuity in this realm does not mean that there has been a corresponding discontinuity in the history of man, much less in the pride and passions of man.

If calculations of those in the best position to know are reasonably accurate, the worst nuclear war possible now would leave eighty percent of the earth's population alive and healthy. Such a war is probably the least likely contingency, but it seems to be the only contingency that the neo-pacifists talk about. It is possible, perhaps probable, that World War III will be less destructive than World War II, or even than World War I. Many students of military strategy believe that it is militarily redundant and politically unwise to knock out population centers, and that a future war may well be more concentrated on military targets, such as air and missile bases, than was World War II.

And there is nothing in history or in Judeo-Christian religious ethics which makes a general nuclear war inevitable. We may have limited wars, limited by political objectives, and therefore limited in terms of the weapons employed. Korea was limited. So was every violent conflict since the end of World War II. We can have limited conventional wars like Korea. We could have a limited atomic war. Limited wars are dangerous because they have present within them the seeds of a general conflict, but the possibility of prudential restraint should neither be overlooked nor counted upon.

In short, there are many possible forms of military conflict. None of them is attractive, but certainly a limited engagement is far less unattractive than an unlimited holocaust.

What does this mean for moralists and statesmen who are wrestling with the nuclear weapons question? Does it mean we should destroy our stockpile of atomic weapons regardless of what the U.S.S.R. does? Does

it mean that we should unilaterally cease U. S. nuclear tests? I am not going to deal with specific policy questions here, except to say that I am gratified that the United States has extended a self-imposed nuclear test ban until the end of 1959 in order to give our negotiators at Geneva more time to reach a viable ban agreement with the Soviet Union. I hope that an effective test-ban agreement with adequate international inspection provisions can be hammered out.

One final point. In addition to emphasizing the moral necessity of calculation based upon the most significant relevant facts, I would like to suggest that one is obligated to examine with equal thoroughness the probable consequences of the policy he advocates and the policy he rejects. A policy designed to save ten thousand persons from possible future death by radioactivity which had the actual effect of inviting the death of ten million persons or the enslavement of a hundred million persons today could hardly be called morally responsible or politically wise.

ETHICS AND "CALCULATION"

John C. Bennett

I have no quarrel with Dr. Lefever's plea for calculation as one tries to relate ethics to policy, but I think that he has gone far toward losing the ethics in the calculation and that his own example of calculation needs to be challenged radically.

One example of this loss of ethics in calculation is the sentence: "But genetic damage resulting from tests or general war or both, like the number of automobile deaths in the United States, is well within the range of what a civilized society is prepared to tolerate." I assume that "tolerate" is used in some technical sense and not in a moral sense, but even so the sentence is one of the most appalling that I have ever read. For one thing, the people who are killed in automobiles usually choose to ride in automobiles; whereas most of the victims of tests and of nuclear war would have had no chance to make such a choice. They would be the victims of a few distant policy-makers. I think that the traditional distinction between combatants and non-combatants in war does not fit the present realities, but, on any showing, future generations should be regarded as non-combatants. For contemporary policy-makers to assume that they are so right that they can nonchalantly condemn a large number of unborn children to various kinds of genetic distortion is the suspension of ethics.

I often think that in this respect there is among some of us an interesting parallel to the Communist suspension of ethics. The Communists sacrifice people who are now living for the sake of a political policy which is supposed to benefit future generations, but our tendency is to sacrifice future generations for a supposed benefit to people now living. Of the two types of ethical calculation, I think that the Communist calculation, as a form of ethical calculation, is more defensible.

All that Dr. Lefever says about the probable consequences of nuclear war needs to be challenged both in terms of some other consequences which are as important as those which he mentions, and in terms of some estimate of the consequences of the worst alternative to general nuclear war. His most arresting point is that "the *maximum* possible loss of life from a general nuclear war involving the full capacities of the Soviet Union and the United States would be about twenty percent of the earth's population." He goes on to say: "There would be practically no

casualties of any kind south of the equator." I can only outline my criticisms of his extraordinarily complacent presentation of these conclusions.

1. If his statistics are correct, they would not apply ten years from now if the nuclear arms race continues with full force. Since a war in any event is not likely in the immediate future, it is important to look at the probable consequences of present policy under the technological conditions a decade hence.

2. If there are to be no casualties south of the equator, what would be the percentage of the population north of the equator that would be killed or injured, and what would be the effect of this on the communities north of the equator?

3. Such a war would not only destroy the number of people of whom Dr. Lefever speaks; it would also destroy the fabric of community in many nations. It might even wipe out or almost wipe out whole nations which cover a small territory, such as Britain.

4. Dr. Lefever says that "the worst nuclear war now possible would leave eighty percent of the earth's population alive and healthy." They might be without bodily injury but what about their moral and emotional health? The moral trauma resulting from such a war would probably be beyond anything that we can imagine.

5. How much chance would there be for the survival of the institutions of political and spiritual freedom after such a catastrophe? Incidentally, these institutions flourish most north of the equator! Mere survival, bread and order, would for a long time be more important to people than freedom. If Dr. Lefever is interested in avoiding objectionable types of political systems by the policies which he recommends, he is likely to fail if they result in general war.

6. There is a whole range of questions which are almost never discussed having to do with what the worst alternative to general war might be if we are faced with ultimate choices. Suppose that Communist nations were able to extend their power, what in the long run might we expect? Just as Dr. Lefever plays down the consequences of war, it might be quite as convincing to play down the consequences of allowing Communism to find its level in the world without decisive military opposition but with many kinds of resistance in the various countries. For one thing, Communism has shown that it can change in a few decades and become a less intolerable form of society. Its worst consequences might last for a shorter time than the worst consequences of a general nuclear war. Also, there is a question that needs much exploration as to how far Russia would be able to exercise oppressive control at a distance. She has difficulty even now with Poland. She has allowed Yugoslavia to get out from under her control. Is it not possible that the degree of oppressive-

ness of Communist control would depend upon the dynamics within a country? Forms of resistance to Communism in each country might still go on that would be more relevant to its characteristic type of power than nuclear bombs. If there developed a strong and fanatical Communist movement within a country, the worst type of oppression might take place for a limited period. In some cases proximity to Russia might have the same effect as it does in the case of Hungary and East Germany. What is likely to be the effect of more humane institutions in Russia on the degree of ruthlessness it would exercise abroad? What may be the effect of the rivalry of the great Communist powers in leaving a space for some form of freedom for other countries? I have raised these points, not because I am dogmatic about them, but because they are so seldom mentioned. I wish that Dr. Lefever would put his acute mind on them with as ruthless an openness to what may be the realities as he has tried to cultivate in regard to the consequences of war.

I am sure Dr. Lefever and I would agree that the test of any policy is whether it succeeds in preventing *both* of these ultimate disasters. So long as there is hope of doing so, we need to have a balanced policy based upon the calculation as to how to prevent them both. But I see in Dr. Lefever's argument a strange callousness that may undermine the imperative to prevent the general nuclear war. This could profoundly warp policy. We may grant that there are risks in any policy, but is it right to assume that the risks must always run in the one direction?

RIGHT AND WRONG CALCULATION

Paul Ramsey

"Calculation is the life blood of politics," writes Ernest W. Lefever, "*and the heart of ethics*" (italics added). This statement should be subjected to thorough scrutiny, and searchingly criticized.

Indeed, calculation is the heart of ethics as Mr. Lefever understands it. For this reason, there is for him no particular difficulty about making ethico-political judgments; and there is little to disturb or limit the "moral-political calculations" of which he speaks, since the heart of morality was already assumed to be calculative. Research the facts and weigh them properly: this is about all that is needed in politics; and, happily, also about all it is the business of ethics to do.

Of course, uniquely ethical terms are used at decisive points in this analysis; and they have to be understood and not dismissed for not playing an effective role. What is meant by the statement that "principles, goals and values are inescapably involved in all political decisions"? It seems clear in the context of the whole article that the words "principles" and "values" perform the same function and have the same place in relation to political decision and action as the word "goals." Mr. Lefever writes that "no statesman can make policy from principles alone"; and this sentence is followed immediately by: "He must relate goals and ideals to the political facts of life." It is not wrong to regard the second sentence as bearing a relation of "Hebrew parallelism" to the first; and to conclude that the word "principles" means the same as the words "goals" and "ideals."

We may reach the same conclusion from considering Mr. Lefever's assertion about George Kennan's "disengagement" proposals: "They emerged from a rational attempt to relate facts to values, which certainly included a calculation of the probable consequences of competing policies." Here, it may be allowed, not all "consequences" are "values"; but still values are always only among the consequences, and there is no value (or moral "principle") that is not among the consequences and therefore correctly related to action through calculation. A "principle" operates in this analysis of politics in the same way as a "value"; and a "value" means a "goal" or "ideal"—perhaps even a "dream."

This means that, in Mr. Lefever's opinion, ethics is *wholly future-facing*; and *therefore*, since obviously calculation is future-facing, ethics and

political calculation go nicely together, and in fact calculation is the heart of ethics. Far from this being the case, we must affirm to the contrary that a wholly teleological view of ethics amounts to the suspension of ethics. This is the case whether our goals are spiritual or material, whether the ideals or values we seek are believed to be on earth or in heaven. If no more can be said about the morality of *action* than can be derived backward from the future goal, thus unrolling toward the present the path that we shall have to tread by deeds determined by calculating their utility, ethics has already more than half-way vanished, i.e., it has *become* calculation of the means to projected ends.

Of course, these ends, goals, values toward which "moral-political calculation" is directed may themselves be high and mighty important ones, and it does make a great deal of difference what are the goals or values a society seeks. Still, this is to say that there is nothing that should not be done which a future-facing calculation seems to require; and no action which can be calculated to produce the described result which should not *therefore* be defined as good. Such a view has to be rejected as the suspension of a great part of ethics, without in any sense minimizing the significance of calculation for both ethics and politics.

Protestant Christian ethics today comes from a long line of prudent people. The pacifism which between the world wars spread widely in the non-peace churches, the non-pacifism which gradually overcame this as World War II approached and which continues today, the increasing pragmatism of the Niebuhrians, the rejection of natural law and "middle axioms" in favor of contextualism and the study of "decision making"—all this has been largely a matter of determining the "lesser evil" or perchance the "greater good," and, by a calculation of the facts, finding the path along which action should be directed in order to defend or secure some sort of values at the end of the road toward which action reaches, yet never reaches. This is an ethic well calculated to reduce every present reality—people and principles no less than facts—altogether to what they may do to bring in the future. Against this, it should be affirmed that "prudence" has rightly to be understood to be in the service of some prior principle, whether in application of natural law principles or (if, as I believe, these alone are inadequate) in application of divine charity.

No one can read the so-called Dun report of the Federal Council of Churches ("The Christian Conscience and Weapons of Mass Destruction," December, 1950) without feeling the moral confusion beneath its weak rejection of "total" war. The "sense" in which total war was repudiated was there defined as "war in which all moral restraints are thrown aside and all the purposes of the community are fully controlled by sheer military expedience"; and this clearly meant, in the main, wan-

ton killing or a savagery that kills without reckoning: "We cannot, therefore, be released from the responsibility for doing no more hurt than must be." In other words, the main consideration effective in this report was the prudential balancing of effects, of greater against lesser evils.

When prudence stands so nearly alone, and only in the context of a teleological ethic, it is not surprising that for long stretches of the way, with the exception of a few unassimilated sentences about the moral immunity of non-combatants, this report sounds rather like a statement of standards for the Housing, Care and Surgical Handling of Laboratory Animals. After all, in the latter case no one countenances wanton cruelty, and the teleologically suspended ethics of the code of the S.P.C.A. is quite capable of ruling that it is "immoral" to use methods that cause laboratory rats more pain and maiming without commensurate medical or scientific decisiveness. This outlook has not yet come upon any crucial moral considerations.

Robert L. Calhoun, therefore, was quite correct when in his minority statement he wrote concerning the majority opinion: "The norm of practically effective inhibitions turns out to be, after all, military decisiveness; but beyond ruling out wanton destructiveness, Christian conscience in wartime seems to have chiefly the effect (certainly important but scarcely decisive) of making Christians do reluctantly what military necessity requires." Not only a pacifist like Calhoun should be able to say this, but anyone from whose conscience the principles of the just war doctrine have not been completely eroded, as against mere future-facing calculation of consequences. The morality of means referred to in the "justified" war theory meant more than the inert weapon as such; it meant the *conduct* of war as such, the *action* as a whole and its nature, which had a morality or an immorality not wholly swallowed up in consequences or in motive to ends believed to justify any action that may be thought to have military decisiveness.

Mr. Lefever's reduction of ethics to calculation leaves him unable properly to understand George Kennan's pronouncements on nuclear tests and nuclear weapons, and incapable of pointing out what has been correct and what mistaken in Kennan's statements. He cites, for example, the latter's remark about the danger from nuclear fallout: "Whoever gave us the right, as Christians, to take even one innocent life?" This, Mr. Lefever says, illustrates "Mr. Kennan's nonchalant attitude toward facts and calculation in the area of nuclear weapons." Actually, this shows the one grave mistake Kennan has made in the use of ethical *principles*; and this needs to be corrected before Mr. Lefever or anyone else launches upon a calculation of the facts which Kennan is supposed to have refused, nonchalantly or otherwise.

The basic error in theoretical analysis is that in what he says about the *future* innocents who may die as a result of present tests, Mr. Kennan treats the probable *effect* of our present actions as if it were a *means* at present employed to obtain the ends we desire. The time-sequence of the acts put forth by men or nations cannot be reversed in this way. All action thrusts toward the future, and many or most actions have double or multiple effects or consequences in the future; and this raises questions of a different order from the ethics of the means or the nature of the present action as such.

Granted that the death of one child from man-made leukemia will be evil in itself, there is a significant distinction still to be made between whether this is an *effect* among many other good and evil effects that will result from our present course of action, or whether it is a *means* which, intentionally and in and of itself, objectively as well as subjectively, is ordered to the achieving of some choice-worthy goal.

While the end may never justify the means, one effect justifies another effect, in the sense that an evil, unavoidable effect may be produced if that is the only way, by action not wrong in itself, to secure some very good result. Now we come, and only at this point, do we come, to the proper work of calculation, in the comparison of effects, weighing their gravity, estimating the sufficiency of the reasons for them, and balancing greater against lesser goods or lesser evils.

To no one except Mr. Lefever will it seem that Kennan's "implied judgment that all bomb tests under all circumstances are morally wrong seems to be based in part upon a picture of fallout danger that bears little resemblance to the findings of leading research institutions in this country and abroad." How can it seriously be suggested that Kennan calculated, or *miscalculated*, his way to the absolute judgment about not taking one innocent life? If this was mistaken as applied to nuclear tests, it was a mistake *in principle*, in not distinguishing between taking human life as a means, and unavoidably taking human life as one of the indirect effects of action, to some good end.

Presumably there will be a degree of genetic havoc, and an increase by an unknown number of the cases of leukemia, to result from joint underground nuclear explosions, recently proposed by Mr. Selwyn Lloyd, since a "negligible" amount of radiation will leak out through cracks in the mountain, but a possible result may also be a greater likelihood of agreement on banning future tests because the nations may learn how to perfect the instruments for detecting them. Mr. Lefever should say to Mr. Kennan: this good and that evil have to be calculated and weighed the one against the other; and your refusal to pay proper attention to the facts results from your failure to see that a possibly evil effect that may

follow along with good effects from any action is not to be understood as an immoral means causally conducive to one of these other effects as an end.

Then only will the ground in morality be made secure beneath Mr. Lefever's own contentions: (1) "Genetic damage resulting from tests or general war or both, like the number of automobile deaths in the United States, is well within the range of what a civilized society is prepared to tolerate." (2) "A policy designed to save ten thousand persons from possible future death by radioactivity which had the actual effect of inviting the death of ten million persons today could hardly be called morally responsible or politically wise."

No one should wince at these statements, *provided* it is clear that a society engaging in these calculations as to the indirect effects of action would already have become uncivilized if it engages at all in a like calculation at another point, i.e., if it might under certain circumstances be persuaded that the life of one or the lives of ten or ten thousand may be directly repressed simply as a means that good may come of it.

But Mr. Lefever jumps altogether over the morality of action when at another point he becomes absorbed in calculations—calculation which is always only a subordinate part of moral judgment and to be entered upon logically only after the ethical guidelines of action have been fixed. "According to the best projections available," he writes, "the *maximum* possible loss of life from a general nuclear war involving the full present capacities of the Soviet Union and the United States would be about twenty percent of the earth's population. The number killed might well be considerably less. There would be practically no casualties of any kind south of the equator. . . . If calculations of those in the best position to know are reasonably accurate, the worst nuclear war possible now would leave eighty percent of the earth's population alive and healthy."

It is not that this calculation in the case of nuclear war, like David, has already killed its ten thousands, while calculation in the case of nuclear testing, like Saul, has already killed only its thousands. At its heart, ethics counts not in quantities and, as Kant said, you cannot do morality a greater disservice than by *deriving* it from experience. It is rather that the death and devastation contemplated in the case of all-out nuclear war would be both *directly willed* and *directly done* as a means, while the death brought about by nuclear testing *as such* is only *indirectly willed* and *indirectly done* as one among several effects of the tests.

The first is murder, the second tragic. In the one case, death to the innocent is the instrument used for defense or victory; in the other case, death to the innocent is a foreknown side-effect of action done in such a way as may be judged to be good, or at least neutral, in itself, and to

be necessary to obtain great good results. The latter calculation concerning nuclear tests may be wrong; but in the former case it would be wrong to calculate and count on the good or less evil consequences that may come from a wrong done (acts of all-out nuclear war).

The recent utterances of George Kennan have all been, not calls to abandon calculation, but to abandon calculation in the wrong place, in the place of fundamental moral principle. He has tried to recall us to the only doctrine of civilized warfare the West has known, to a reexamination as a "straight issue of conscience" of the degree of acceptance of indiscriminate bombing by nuclear weapons that is present in our nuclear deterrence policy, and to call us back from our apparent willingness to rest our security (as he said to the Women's Democratic Club in Washington, D. C.) on weapons designed to "destroy innocent noncombatant human life, including the lives of children, on a vast scale," back from "an infinitely costly and hopeless exercise in reciprocal menace" by means which it would be vastly immoral ever to use.

There can be no greater evil, I take Kennan to be saying, than the act of *using* unlimited weapons all-out; and the one thing worse than to suffer such an evil would be to do it. Sophistry has always opposed a Gorgias who declares this to be the case. Kennan is quite right, no calculation taught him this, nor should calculation be allowed to deprive him or us of a forever valid moral judgment.

It is interesting that at one point Mr. Lefever speaks of the lack of statesmanlike utility to be found in "Mr. Kennan's manners and principles." It is very true that the latter's principles, like his "sheer good manners," would be falsified and dispelled if either were sought to be leveled to the one dimension of their future-facing consequences. Good manners like good morals are never qualities wholly teleologically oriented or derived; and while calculation is of service to both, it cannot be the heart of either. Manners and morals have, in different ways, to do with the definition of right *conduct* and not only with the ends of action; with the *how* and not only with *what* we do or the *whither* of our deeds.

Mr. Kennan has not confused manners with morals or manners with policy, as Mr. Lefever asserts, unless the substance of policy and of morals is supposed to embrace only "moral-political calculation" and to be exhausted in their teleological reference to the goals of action. It is altogether praiseworthy that Kennan has emphasized that the principles of political conduct, or the conduct of politics, govern action as such in more ways than is required by a calculative utility. It is good also that Kennan, experienced as he is in the practice of diplomacy, assures amateurs who are apt to believe such principles to be reeds shaken by every wind that blows from over our future goals, and apt also, as outsiders to

affairs of state, to believe realistic calculation affords a greater surety and a clearer direction, that a statesman's "farsightedness and powers of calculation" alone may often not be worth relying on. He calls us neither to policies guided only by principles without calculation (as do some neo-pacifists) nor (as do many of his critics) to policies guided only by prudent calculation and doubtfully controlled by "ideals."

In this sense, Mr. Lefever, not Mr. Kennan, is the "idealist" in politics. The idealist is one who goes on his way and finds his way under the lure of such goals as the greatest good of the greatest number, etc. A realist is one who knows that there are many ways that reasonably may be supposed to lead there, ranging all the way from the noblest to the most wicked political decisions and action; and he reminds the calculative idealist that in politics he had better know more than this about right and wrong conduct.

We shall have to know more than this if mankind in the state of modern civilization is going to make it around the next turn. Those who say that it may not be possible for us to limit warfare are *almost* certainly correct. Surely war will never be kept a just endurable human enterprise if it is sought to be kept limited only "by political objectives, and therefore limited in terms of the weapons employed," and if fear alone is invoked to restrain the means. Limited ends do tend to moderate the means ventured and caused to be mounted in return, and the cost paid and exacted in warfare.

But not only the military force made possible by modern technology works against our being able to achieve the control of warfare by aiming at modest ends, but also the endless restless aspiration of the human spirit, which displays its want of heaven even in the towering attempts at grandeur and wickedness with which history is replete. Moreover, ends and means interpenetrate; and this can be as well read in the other direction: limited (or unlimited) means or weapons are available and resolved to be used, and therefore limited (or unlimited) political objectives may be thought to be proper goals in war. Calculative morality and politics cannot dispense with exhortations to people to adopt only limited goals, and therefore it must rely upon a revival of this aspect of the moral tradition of civilized warfare.

At the same time there is need for a re-creation, in both thought and feeling, of the moral tradition of civilized warfare as to the right *conduct* of war and the moral limitation to be placed upon means. Surely, the immunity of noncombatants from indiscriminate, direct attack may come again to govern the consciences of men as readily or with as great improbability as they will set limits to the political objectives they pursue.

It would ill behoove churchmen, in this land that so dramatically over-

stepped this moral limit, not to follow the lead Mr. Kennan has given. For, rightly understood, his is not a rejection of calculation in its proper place, nor a neo-pacifism based on a new religious absolutism inserted into politics where it is alien, but a reconstruction of the ancient theory of "justified" warfare, which always supposed that war for the wrong ends and war conducted contrary to the natural (rational) law of war as a just barely human enterprise (however immoral means may be calculated to be required by political objectives) was not so to be engaged in by either just or good Christian men.

Postscripts

A REPLY BY MR. LEFEVER:

I have profited much by the helpful criticism from Dean Bennett and Mr. Ramsey and I agree with much of what each has said. Since I am criticized for things I omitted, let me say some of them here, although it seems redundant for a Christian to reaffirm that he hates war and desires peace, justice and liberty.

Thanks to technology we are living in world of unprecedented dangers. The threat of a catastrophically destructive war is the most urgent challenge confronting mankind. The United States faces an enemy with the capacity to devastate our country in a massive surprise attack. We have a similar capacity.

In this increasingly perilous world the chief goal of U. S. foreign policy is to defend our national security, and the values represented by that security, by means which will frustrate further Communist aggression without initiating, provoking or inviting general nuclear war. To do this we need a balanced defense establishment capable of deterring general war and of throwing back local assaults without using strategic nuclear weapons.

At the same time we must make every reasonable effort to mitigate the arms race. Proper arms control measures will contribute to international military stability and will enhance the security of both sides. We should work unceasingly for a sound agreement with the Soviets. In the absence of such an international agreement, there are significant steps the United States can take unilaterally to lower the risk of nuclear war. In building our defenses, for example, we should seek to avoid a provocative posture. This would make us appear less dangerous to the Soviet Union and might evoke a less menacing posture on her part. Arms control is a complex problem. I would support a massive—forgive the word—research effort to explore the many facets of this question.

Every decent person wants a world free from the slaughter of the innocent. We also want a world where men can walk erect without being bludgeoned into submission by a tyrant. At certain points in history peoples and their leaders must choose between the exercise of military force and submission to tyranny. A gross tyranny, which itself may lead to gross slaughter, is hardly to be preferred to the heavy burden of maintaining a defense posture designed to hold back tyranny and deter war. If history is a guide, even a limited military action is to be preferred to an externally imposed tyranny.

But this does not answer the moral dilemma of a statesman who must

choose between resisting tyranny by means which may lead to general nuclear war and submission to tyranny which, through the passage of time, may be moderated. Bertrand Russell notwithstanding, a statesman will never be confronted with a simple choice of being Red or dead. He will always confront a tragic choice, because finite human beings cannot fully foresee the good and evil which flow from alternative decisions.

I did not attempt to play down "the consequences of war," as Dean Bennett suggests, but to play up the necessity of calculation to formulate policies which will make nuclear war less likely. Nor have I reduced ethics to calculation, as Mr. Ramsey implies.

A moral act always involves at least four elements: a point of reference which transcends the situation (e.g., God's will for men), an assessment of the resources available to the actor, a calculation between resources and goals in light of the transcendent reference, and—finally—decision. Bad calculation leads to the surrender of our values. Good calculation preserves our values as fully as possible under the tragic circumstances in which we must act. This is hardly contextual ethics, or even Mr. Ramsey's "future-facing calculation of consequences."

One sentence in my essay bothered several readers, in part because of its ambiguous language. It has to do with genetic damage. Let me write it as I meant it. Genetic damage resulting from tests or from nuclear war (or from both tests and war) is well within the range of what a civilized society is prepared to tolerate. This is a simple statement of fact. Many societies have tolerated much more suffering. At present X number of babies are born with damage due to natural radiation. If the radiation were doubled in heavy fallout areas because of general nuclear war, the number of babies with radiation-caused birth defects would presumably be doubled. "Any injury is always an individual tragedy," but doubling the number of damaged babies, or even tripling the number, is a tragedy that society can endure, can tolerate, especially if the alternative is thought to be possible surrender to an evil regarded by the great majority of its citizens as far more sinister.

Dean Bennett's implication that my ethics are worse than Communist ethics because I am willing to "sacrifice future generations for a supposed benefit to people now living" is difficult to comprehend. Neither statesmen nor moralists can see very far into the future. The fabric of history is woven on one loom and we cannot make sharp distinctions between yesterday, today and tomorrow. History is a tangled web of cause and effect. Every policy or act has many unforeseen consequences which cannot be escaped or wished away.

We are called upon to act for the present generation without doing things which clearly doom a future generation. If we succeed in prevent-

ing a general nuclear war without inviting Communist expansion, we are doing well by both the present and the future. It is possible that the unilateral cessation of nuclear tests by the United States, undertaken to "benefit future generations," will do more harm to both the present generation and to generations yet unborn than alternative policies would do. I repeat: "A policy designed to save ten thousand persons from possible future death by radioactivity which had the actual effect of inviting the death of ten million persons or the enslavement of a hundred million persons today could hardly be called morally responsible or politically wise."

RABBI SCHWARZSCHILD:

Limited space permits only one additional observation to be made from among the many which a re-reading of the articles in this series has produced.

Hillel the Elder once described the act of taking a bath as a pious act. When his disciples expressed their amazement at this seeming blasphemy, he pointed out that washing the body is to care for the image of God in which man is created.

It would appear that what we most need in our contemporary discussions of peace and war is to regain this Biblical respect for the sanctity of the body, for the creatureliness of crass matter, and to take down a peg or two our vaunted concern with "spirituality."

War has, of course, always involved the desecration of the Image—of the corporeal image of the killed, not to speak of the spiritual image of the killers. At this time, however, an even more fundamental Greek contempt for the material world is implicitly being reasserted. Walter Millis goes so far as to speak of war as one of the ugly but morally neutral facts of life on a par with pain, pestilence, and natural disaster. Surely—to use terms proposed several decades ago by the great Kafka interpreter Max Brod in an important book, *Paganism, Christianity, Judaism*—this is to confuse "noble suffering" under conditions which cannot be humanly remedied with "ignoble suffering" which can and, therefore, should be remedied. One can almost hear the silent premise underlying such a confusion willingly accepted: "But this is only physical existence. There are higher values, such as freedom, justice, etc." Of course there are. But these are values not for angels as for human beings of flesh and blood.

The most disturbing political application of this contempt for matter is the moral and social identification of Communism with Nazism. Even John Cogley, of all people, accepts this concept. Because of our memory of the danger of Nazism we can no longer countenance pacifism, he be-

lieves. Let us for the moment assume that Nazism refuted pacifism. Let us also disregard the fact that to millions of people it was the Red Army that opened the gates of Terezin and Oczwiecem. It still remains true that, whereas Nazism was the savage rebellion against Western culture, dialectical materialism is a protest against an occidental distortion of the Bible—gone awry and corrupted in Communism, of course, but nevertheless remaining within the stream fed by the fountains of Jerusalem and Athens.

To forget this all-important distinction is to fall for the game of the neo-fascists. But the contemners of matter are profoundly pre-disposed to embrace this mistake: is not Communism materialism, and is not materialism the worship of the devil? Therefore, to them Communism is satanism and must be fought accordingly. To us Nazism was the authentic spiritual God and Magog and different from Communism; it had to be fought differently.

The final result of this excessive anti-materialism is a peculiar quietistic stance toward war and an activist one toward Communism. We must do everything in our power to stem and defeat Communism, and we must patiently wait until in some mysterious way, in the absence of pressure from us to this end, war will have eliminated itself. Stephen Cary is certainly right: without the pull on the "left" by at least a minority of pacifists the "liberals" will only feel the pull from the "right," and they will increasingly become that wing of militarism which has a slightly bad conscience. This is the least service that pacifism can and must render today.

MR. MILLIS:

The year and more which has passed since my contribution to *world-view's* series has suggested to me no reason for changing it. The crowded record has, however, tended to confirm the two main points I tried to make: the great difficulty of dealing with problems of war and international relations in moral terms, and the likelihood that practical solutions will somehow be achieved with no particular aid from the moralists. The difficult passages involving the disarmament negotiations and summit meeting have not been smoothed by the moralistic appeals of the statesmen—neither by Khrushchev's moralistic denunciations of criminal and illegal "aggression" nor by Eisenhower's righteous insistence that he would go anywhere and do anything to secure a "just and lasting peace."

The ethical and legal justifications advanced for the espionage overflights must have left many Americans besides myself in a state of con-

siderable bewilderment. The whole episode reminds one of Woodrow Wilson's attempts to deal, in sternly moralistic terms, with a new technical development—the German submarine—which simply could not be fitted into existing concepts of the ethics or the international law of war. Like the U-boat, the U-2 was a technical development which did not fit what pre-existing rules there were, and our people fumbled with it as badly as the Germans in the First War fumbled their arguments for the submarine.

But the practical results appear to be happier. Wilson scorned the German argument; and the result was a war which ironically confirmed the German case and left unrestricted submarine war an accepted element in military technology. Khrushchev has poured scorn and contumely upon our arguments for the U-2; but he has retired from the summit leaving most feeling that war is even less probable than it was before. If his performance was verbally brutal and our own diplomatically less than brilliant, the episode instills a greater confidence in the capacity of statesmanship on both sides to thread a practical way through the great perils surrounding us—perils in large part generated by the fiercely moralistic attitudes brought, on both sides of the Iron Curtain, to the problem of modern military technology.

MR. CARY:

Looking back with a year's perspective at this *worldview* series, it seems to me that the kind of choice faced by the Church in world affairs is even more sharply etched in 1960 than it was in 1959. The power politics of the Cold War, dictating overflights, mutual security pacts, and support of anti-Communist regimes, however oppressive, have brought disaster in their wake. Contrary policies aimed at rapprochement and involving goodwill tours and human interchange have as sharply produced opposite and happier results. These developments underline the fact that if we would draw forth the best from people, we must expect the best from them rather than the worst.

This concept is inherent in the Christian ethic, which is the only plumbline the Church can use if it is to be the Church. It cannot calculate *whether* it is relevant, but only what will make it relevant. Which, translated into the practical terms of U.S.-U.S.S.R. relations, suggests that the Churches' calculative role is to weigh American policy in terms of what will best lift up those forces in the Soviet Union that are good, and weaken those that are evil. In so doing it will be contributing not to victory in the Cold War, but to its honorable end, which should be the goal of all men of good will.

This process of change, on the other hand, cannot be encouraged by the doctrine of deterrence, which will necessarily produce a response in kind, and strengthen the hands of the least desirable military and Party elements in the Soviet Union. A more unfortunate development could hardly be imagined. Those, therefore, who expect the emergence of either a climate for negotiation or a stable military environment out of the construction of such a nuclear house of cards exhibit an optimism for which there would appear to be scant grounds. Mr. Lefever suggests that there "may be important factors . . . which . . . make for restraint." So there may, but there may *not* be too, and the world won't get a second chance if there is even one instance where the restraints are absent. These are perilously high stakes.

And what are the demands of deterrence at home? It should be clear to all that power does not deter unless the enemy believes we are prepared to employ it. We must therefore *be* prepared to employ it. Nuclear war must be made thinkable to the American people, and rational men are now engaged in drawing up rational plans for nuclear wars to be fought at various theoretical levels, the least destructive of which posits fifty million American casualties. They are calling for America to spend countless more billions in going underground and stepping up missile production, as necessary components to making deterrence effective by showing the Russians we mean business. This logic is unassailable, once the concept of deterrence is accepted, but if America is really ready to go down this road in the name of defending Christian values, then Orwell's 1984 is indeed upon us.

I ask again, therefore, whether the Church can continue to support a doctrine that inhibits the emergence of new and moderate elements in the Soviet Union, drives the world toward an even more finely honed knife-edge of terror, and involves us in a commitment to wage nuclear war if necessary. My answer is: No.

WAR AND THE ABSOLUTISTS

Kenneth W. Thompson

No problem facing contemporary world leaders tests political intelligence and moral imagination more severely than the issue of nuclear weapons. The awesome question of what is a viable armaments policy perplexes men no less in 1960 than it did in 1945. What are responsible governments to do with instruments of lethal destruction? What programs can international institutions devise that will broaden the narrow spectrum of security that nations have enjoyed since World War II? Who is prepared to gamble on another's restraint with growing stockpiles of ever more deadly weapons? If there is no security in national weakness can states find safety in national strength? If so, what has happened to criteria of national power when thermonuclear devices can in fatal strikes wipe out whole populations, armies and industrial potentials? How is the moralist to find his way between the shoals of a heedless compassion that asks too much of collective virtue and a harsh cynicism that denies the prospect of national suicide and mutual annihilation? What are the points of convergence of justice and security and how can they be kept in balance when technology continually alters crucial elements in the equation?

To approach the armaments field through a set of baffling questions is hardly reassuring, for no other realm of international relationships more desperately requires clearcut answers and solutions. We reassure one another that reasonable men can find a way out of the present impasse if they but contrive more imaginative policies. Those who admit stalemate or protracted uncertainty in political, economic, moral or social conflicts instinctively prefer more precise designs and overall blueprints for the armaments problem. For example, many who see no abatement in political tensions between Moscow and Washington affirm that one action or another will assure an early end to the arms race, for failing this all men will perish. Disarmament commends itself as a sensible way out when the problems of Berlin, Formosa or Cuba prove insoluble. To this approach most lend assent up to the point our policymakers carry new programs into the international arena. When their efforts fail, however, we look to explanations that question their good will, motivation, or intelligence, but rarely the stubborn quality of the problem itself. Fifteen years of disappointment and frustration in negotiating an end to the arms race

are apparently inconclusive for the vast majority of dedicated observers.

Yet if men like General George C. Marshall or Prime Minister Winston S. Churchill had been trusted, we should have devoted greater energy and attention to preparing to live for a generation or more with the terrifying risks of nuclear destruction. It must be recalled that a handful of wise leaders worried that demands for an end to armed tension showed little sign of realization without a more basic shift in the international climate. Believing this, their prescription required more intellectual and moral effort than most moralists or cynics are prone to accept. The notion that "states arm to parley" is at one and the same time offensive to pacifists and extreme militarists whose diagnosis is inevitably more convincing and satisfying to broad sectors of public opinion. Furthermore, when any problem as intractable as the armaments problem resists every attempt at solution, more radical approaches take the field. If warfare persists, men seek to outlaw it. When great power negotiations break down, the public at large demands that "people speak to people." The unquenchable faith in reason by which Western civilization has advanced generates the belief that no issue that divides men can long remain outside the boundaries of genuine understanding. Failure to solve a problem must therefore seek a scapegoat, whether imperfect institutions, ill-prepared negotiators, or laggard policymakers. Someone must have been asleep at the switch, for otherwise reason and humanity would surely have freed us from the dread crisis.

I know that any analysis which places the accent on elements of the armaments problem that up to now have denied success to serious and responsible leaders is bound to evoke hostility and deep distrust. Critics will ask if the observer tends to leave millions of helpless men and women to their fate. What has happened to his sense of moral revulsion to war, to a renunciation of the acts and means of violence, or to the compelling lesson that man should love, not seek to destroy, his brother? Moreover, doesn't the student of international conflict move unconsciously and imperceptibly from describing the facts of international life as he sees them to a posture of belaboring those who condemn him for his callousness and immorality? Then too, the further risk is always with him that he develop a vested interest in the status quo with all its tragic failures and shattered hopes. The more he observes the cancerous state of affairs brought about by such profound divisions as the rift between East and West, the more he comes to accept it, at least in the short run and barring fundamental changes, as a permanent condition to be relieved, temporarily alleviated, but never fully eliminated or cured.

Yet the moral risks of facing reality cannot excuse the diplomatist any more than the doctor from accepting the distressing burdens that are

inherent in his task. If all patients were free of disease at all times, the doctor's place could appropriately be filled by someone else with other training and skills. If the international stage were not plagued by rivalry, distrust and suspicion, negotiators who have learned to take conflict in stride would quickly become obsolete. Incidentally, no diplomatist worthy of the name believes that warfare is inevitable. It is conflict and rivalry, particularly among those who contend for influence and authority, that is taken for granted, and the search is unrelenting for ways and means to limit rivalries and prevent the struggle for power from crossing over into open strife and war. The vocation and the commitment of the negotiator compel him to believe that war is not inevitable. When the inflammation caused by tension and rivalry grows too intense, he must apply a poultice to relieve the infection until time and circumstances can restore health to the body politic. If he were to act as if the infection were imaginary or could be "reasoned" away, he should have failed in his calling, however humane and civilized his motives might be. The doctor can hardly assume that health will supplant disease once and for all; neither can the diplomat proceed as if virtue were obliterating sinfulness or cooperation had superseded conflict.

I accept the fact that for any sensitive conscience the need to recognize the dual reality of good and evil can be profoundly distressing. Few liberal Christians and humanists deny the reality of imperfect virtue and they labor faithfully in social reform and aid to the oppressed to reduce, not eliminate, human suffering. They accept the necessity of charity even within blatantly oppressive and unjust social systems whose purposes they must ultimately condemn. Here liberals and particularly pacifists link the "incompatible" forces of an ethic of love and coexistence with tyrannical regimes. Because I believe they are right in striving to bring aid and comfort to victims of an unjust political order even at the expense of strengthening that order, I am puzzled by their austere rejection of ethical pragmatism in confronting the armaments problem. Surely limited war is morally superior to total war and the Cold War is to be preferred to a shooting war. Yet moral relativists who see some justice in the most tyrannical regimes become moral absolutists in the claim that there is "no other course for the Church but the final rejection of war as an instrument for achieving justice." I would not ask men to form an unholy alliance with evil nor justify what is wrong, but I would only hope they might consider that cooperation with evil in the interests of the good cannot be defended in political and social relations and utterly condemned in the military realm.

I suspect the source of this illusion rests in the belief that men can draw an absolute distinction between strategies of violence and non-vio-

lence. Non-violent resistance is often equated with the pure gospel of love. Sometimes indeed, it may be morally superior to violence. Yet the Holy Gospel has nothing to say about strategems of non-violence through which one group seeks to impose its will on another. The seeds of evil group themselves around a man's desire and necessity, as he sees it, to have his way with someone else, restricting thereby the self-fulfillment of human personality. The basis of wrong-doing would seem to be the encroachment of one will on another and the denial of self-realization and individuality. Violence is a more egregious form of this evil but is not fundamentally a thing apart.

I fear moral absolutism in the face of the nuclear problem partly because the resources of Christian ethics are so desperately needed in the proximate decisions of military policy. I must agree with the statement of the British Council of Churches that "restraint is a major Christian objective." Yet if Christians can only condemn military programs, as some have traditionally denounced all forms of politics, who will defend that objective? Who will speak for reason, self-limitation and restricting the build-up of defenses to proportions that will deter and inhibit a reckless enemy without endless striving to surpass him in every weapon within a vast armory of destructiveness? Who will hold the reins on policies of unconditional surrender and programs aimed at liquidating an opponent? Who will pursue the goal of limiting conflict in scope and character? If Christians or Jews restrict themselves to condemning and denouncing all politics and military measures, they leave to others, as we must sadly confess has too often been the case, the pursuit of Judeo-Christian objectives like restraint. I say this not to condemn those who hold honestly and sincerely to another viewpoint but because this issue seems fundamental to me, as apparently it also does to the British Council of Churches.

If moral certainty in the control and elimination of nuclear weapons exceeds the wit and attainment of man, no one who would responsibly serve his nation and the world can abandon the search for more viable policies for limited problems. The irony of the nuclear age is that all-out war has lost its inner logic but no major power across the vast chasm of mutual distrust can afford to be the first to found its policies upon this premise. However, the first level at which moral compulsion properly takes the stage is at the point where man's necessity to control and eliminate warfare conflicts with his insufficiency to do so. Those who assert that the practical man must "accept war in the abstract as a fact of life" are doubtless correct as are those who point out that most choices the statesman makes are practical ones at several stages removed from the moral issue. Yet moral man faced with mankind's extinction has an obligation

by virtue of common humanity to resist in every practical way the unfolding of a chain of events leading to disaster. Moral responsibility for others no less than himself requires him to act with moral and political discrimination to prevent war from breaking out, to restrict its spread once it erupts, and to bring it to an end as promptly and decisively as possible. Moral discrimination is an unending process and those who would restrict it to outlawing war and the instruments of warfare confine it within too narrow limits. The compulsion to seek moral distinctions across a wide spectrum of war and peace is generated by a morality comprehensive enough to embrace both means and ends.

Secondly, the moralist for these reasons is entitled to speak not merely about war in the abstract but about particular wars and the military and political conditions that either increase the likelihood of war or threaten to carry a struggle beyond the point of self-defense or legitimate national or international interests. We know enough about the tendencies of men and nations, so we can assert that great weakness has almost always invited expansion and aggression by those possessing great strength. The duty of statesmen is to reduce the temptation for dynamic expansionist movements to spread their influence and their cause. At the same time, under circumstances of present-day technology, nations can ill-afford to build defense systems capable alone of wars of last recourse. Despite repeated claims that conventional wars had been rendered obsolete, outbreaks since World War II have all been conventional in nature. Military conflict and the threat of conflict in Korea, Hungary, Suez, Vietnam and Lebanon have followed the conventional pattern. Nor is the argument convincing that the West has no practical alternative. A leading military analyst writes: "Many of the assumptions regarding the impossibility of conventional defense and of the 'hordes' of Communist manpower, are either fallacious or exaggerated. Both in total available manpower and in its industrial potential the free world still is superior."

Neither national necessity nor military logic excuses American diplomatic and intellectual leaders from considering principles defining the limits of military preparation and conduct. An armaments program aimed at overwhelming nuclear superiority must be questioned both on military and ethical grounds, for the purpose of thermonuclear strength is to confront an adversary "with the certainty of severe retaliation, sufficient to make the adventure too costly." The goal under present-day conditions cannot be organizing the means of victory since "the real defeat is the war itself, for it involves a common fate which will be visited on all who have anything to do with it." Yet reasonable prudence in establishing limited nuclear strength may prove a deterrent to those who might otherwise dare to use weapons they monopolized. Even a great and hu-

mane people succumbed to such a temptation, and we are constrained to speculate over what course we might have followed at Hiroshima if others had possessed the bomb.

The United States cannot afford to reject cavalierly "the principle of proportion." Whatever the difficulties of enforcing restraint, the ancient truth holds good that grave injustices may not be repressed by means bringing greater injustice than the perpetuation of the injustice. I am not convinced that a reexamination of the classic texts on the conditions of a just war or of defensive wars is outmoded in our time. The great publicists of the past were more inclined than some of our latter-day international lawyers to view law and justice in context. They searched their souls and the practice of states to ascertain when and how states and princes could be expected to keep their commitments. Circumstances led them to write less of enforcement systems and more of conditions of self-interest and mutual trust. They talked of levels and orders of justice and were not above accepting the compromises absolute justice was compelled to make if a tolerable order was to be preserved. I find in such writings and in much of the historic Catholic literature, partly because its precepts are rooted both in heaven and earth, a greater sense of moral discrimination and attention to proximate orders of justice than in the writings of many Christian or Jewish perfectionists.

A brilliant philosopher viewing the contemporary scene asks, "Where are the ethical principles to fix the appropriate limits?" If he had broadened his question to read "where are the ethical *and political* principles" he might have obtained an answer. Any system of limitation must serve the national interests of both parties. We are told that an armaments agreement will be self-enforcing if compliance serves such interests better than evasion or violation. The underpinnings of every international arrangement are, of course, moral in character. There must be a semblance of mutual trust. The basic problem in East-West relations has been and remains the conspicuous absence of such trust. If this trust is to be created, however, it must grow from the discovery of mutual interests so overpowering as to transcend sharp ideological cleavages. Do Russians and Americans have a common interest in attacking the problem of wheat-borne virus? Do they share a mutual interest in restricting the spread and diffusion of atomic weapons among the smaller powers? Should they both cut off the risk of contaminating the atmosphere by ending nuclear tests? Do they have an equal stake in restraining buoyant and reckless powers who on ideological or political grounds would plunge the world into a deathly atomic holocaust? The truth is that answers will come as part of a slow, gradual process the direction of which cannot be measured by the collapse of the Paris talks any more than by the

illusory advances of Geneva or Camp David. No one can foresee the future with its unpredictable turns and pathways. Yet history yields to human initiative and evil may yet spawn good as those of us who examine personal experience must hasten to admit.

Modern man could look to an uncertain future with more assurance if civilization provided surer intellectual and moral footing. On one side, we are endlessly disposed to downgrade the awesome burdens of political leadership and the tragic choices that political reason imposes on the statesman. In his heart, he would prefer freedom to slavery, peace to war and love to power, yet in his official duties he is forever reduced to accepting the lesser evil (or greater good). Because the main stuff of his vocation is political calculation, his actions carry a bad name. From all sides, friends and critics call on him to pursue justice, but because he is often an honest broker of conflicting moral claims, he ends by in some measure failing them all. He must gauge the political consequences of every moral act and with Lincoln accept as his guide the words: "I do the very best I know how, the very best I can, and I mean to keep doing so until the end. If the end brings me out all right, what is said against me won't amount to anything. If the end brings me out wrong, ten angels swearing I was right would make no difference." In this sense, a political ethic is "future-facing" and good intentions or noble manners will not excuse the statesman for moral or political failure.

Yet it also remains true that every political calculation has its moral components, and we remember as our greatest statesman those for whom a tireless conscience preserved the tension between the practical and the good. Prudence stands between a judgment of present reality and some higher and objective good. Incidentally, both cynics and perfectionists are inclined to undervalue the full scope of moral conduct inspired by the tension between these two poles. Thus when a distinguished pacifist scholar writes: "Christian conscience in wartime seems to have chiefly the effect . . . of making Christians do reluctantly what military necessity requires," he closes his eyes to a range of conduct many of us have observed: charity to helpless victims of the struggle, aid to the suffering and the wounded often at great personal risk, and, following the conflict, a lifetime of dedication to peace as the supreme goal. I would suggest that a profound concern, often unarticulated, with the conduct and purpose of war runs deeper in many sensitive hearts than this indictment would suggest.

Nevertheless, students of political ethics are correct in calling us back to "the moral tradition of civilized warfare" and to recreating the military and material circumstances that may foster it. We have need to reflect on right and wrong conduct in war as in peace. I suspect the United

Nations, particularly in parts of the world where suspicion of Westerners runs rampant, can be a limiting and restraining force. Yet given the immense hazards of the clash between the great powers who hold in their hands powers of mutual destruction, we should also have, with Lincoln, a sense of throwing ourselves on the mercy of Providence. In the end this may prove a greater support than political calculation or the resurrection of concepts of a "just" war.

Appendix

FOREIGN POLICY AND CHRISTIAN CONSCIENCE

George F. Kennan

I should like to say at the outset that questions of method in foreign policy seem to me to be generally a much more fitting subject for Christian concern than questions of purpose. It is very difficult for us to know which of the specific undertakings of government in foreign affairs might have Christian significance and which might not. If there is any one thing that is plain about international statesmanship, it is the extreme difficulty of establishing in advance the relationship between cause and effect—of gauging the likely results of one's own acts.

The English historian Herbert Butterfield has shown us with great brilliance, and so has our own Reinhold Niebuhr, the irony that seems to rest on the relationship between the intentions of statesmen and the results they achieve. I can testify from personal experience that not only can one never know, when one takes a far-reaching decision in foreign policy, precisely what the consequences are going to be, but almost never do these consequences fully coincide with what one intended or expected. This does not absolve the statesman of his responsibility for trying to find the measures most suitable to his purpose, but it does mean that he is best off when he is guided by firm and sound principle instead of depending exclusively on his own farsightedness and powers of calculation. And if he himself finds it hard to judge the consequences of his acts, how can the individual Christian onlooker judge them?

All this is quite different when we come to method. Here, in a sense, one can hardly go wrong. The government cannot fully know what it is doing, but it can always know how it is doing it; and it can be as sure that good methods will be in some way useful as that bad ones will be in some way pernicious. A government can pursue its purpose in a patient and conciliatory and understanding way, respecting the interests of

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others and infusing its behavior with a high standard of decency and honesty and humanity, or it can show itself petty, exacting, devious, and self-righteous. If it behaves badly, even the most worthy of purposes will be apt to be polluted; whereas sheer good manners will bring some measure of redemption to even the most disastrous undertaking. The Christian citizen will be on sound ground, therefore, in looking sharply to the methods of his government's diplomacy, even when he is uncertain about its purposes.

In the fabric of international life, there are a great many questions that have no certain Christian significance at all. They represent conflicts between those elements of secular motivation which are themselves without apparent Christian meaning: commercial interests, prestige considerations, fears, and what not. I do not think we can conclude that it matters greatly to God whether the free trade area or the Common Market prevails in Europe, whether the British fish or do not fish in Icelandic territorial waters, or even whether Indians or Pakistani run Kashmir. It might matter, but it is hard for us, with our limited vision, to know.

But these are all questions which reflect the normal frictions between peace-loving nations. How about the issues of the Cold War? How about colonialism? How about aid to the underdeveloped areas? How about the United Nations as an institution? How about the atom? Are not Christian values involved in our attitude toward these questions?

In its internal policies, the state can create a decent human atmosphere, in which the individual has the maximum possibility for grappling in a hopeful and constructive way with the moral problems of personal life. Or it can, as we have seen in the examples of Hitler and Stalin and the Chinese Communists, strike out on the most appalling lines of viciousness and cruelty, deliberately fostering a real sickness of the human spirit and inculcating on people's minds, for its own purposes, suspicion, terror, callousness, and the habit of brutality—creating conditions dreadfully adverse to the success of the Christian cause. Christianity cannot be indifferent to the existence of such doctrines and methods; and whatever prevents their spread and their triumph on a world scale serves, it seems to me, a Christian purpose.

But I do not think this means that every measure that is damaging to international Communism is necessarily good and every measure that is acceptable to a Communist government is necessarily bad. The world is not that simple. Our competition with Moscow is not the only significant reality of international affairs. Our policies, furthermore, must take into account the interests of the peoples under Communist rule as well as those of their governments. Again, we have the question of method and the fact that not even the greatest conviction of righteousness in our

purposes absolves us from the obligation of decency in method. If we allow ourselves to copy our adversary's methods as a means of combating him, we may have lost the battle before we start; for this is, after all, what is most essentially at stake.

Furthermore, we must not make the mistake of regarding international Communism as a static, unchanging quantity in the pattern of world realities. While the full-blown totalitarian state in all its unnatural, nightmarish horror is certainly an abomination in the sight of God, one cannot say this of the conservative authoritarian state which has been the norm of Western society in the Christian era. And we must not forget that it is in this direction that the Soviet government, as distinct from the Chinese Communist government, has been rapidly evolving since Stalin's death. Its gravitation in this direction has not been final or decisive, but it has not been negligible. The mere fact that the most characteristic feature of totalitarian horror, the punishment of whole categories of people for abstract or preventive reasons, has been abolished shows how far the Russians have come since Stalin's day.

Now between democracy and traditional authoritarianism there are still differences, but they are relative and do not present clear-cut issues. The authoritarian regime, despite its origins and its sanctions, often rests on a wide area of popular acceptance and reflects popular aspirations in important degree. In democratic countries, on the other hand, such things as the operations of lobbies and political parties and the inevitable control of nominations by small groups of people tend to reduce the ideal representativeness of government and to make it hard to view the political process as much more than a negative expression of the popular will.

And if you consider, as I do, that the value of a democratic society in the Christian sense depends not just on the fact of its enjoying certain rights and liberties but on the nature of the use made of them, then I think you have to raise questions about our American society of this day. These questions do not need to make us lose hope or hang our heads, but they should cause us to be cautious in drawing conclusions about the merit in God's eyes of any particular form of society.

All these considerations lead me to feel that, while Christian values often are involved in the issues of American conflict with Soviet power, we cannot conclude that everything we want automatically reflects the purpose of God and everything the Russians want reflects the purpose of the devil. The pattern is complex, fuzzy, and unstable. We must look sharply at each individual issue before we jump to conclusions. We must bear in mind that there are things we do not know and cannot know. We must concede the possibility that there might be some areas of conflict involved in this Cold War which a Divine Power could contemplate only

with a sense of pity and disgust for both parties, and others in which He might even consider us to be wrong.

So much for the Cold War. How about colonialism? Nobody seems to suggest any more, I notice, that God might conceivably be on the side of the metropolitan power, despite the fact that of the two parties involved it is often the mother country that represents the Christian society and the colonial people the pagan one. The assumption usually encountered today is that any form of foreign rule is necessarily oppressive and worse than any form of indigenous rule. The next assumption is that any anti-colonial effort is therefore automatically good in the Christian sense—that self-determination, in short, is a Christian purpose.

I am confident that for such assumptions there is not a shred of justification. The erection of the edifice of modern colonialism was not a moral act or a series of moral acts but the response to obvious historical conditions and necessities. It was a phenomenon occasioned by the fact that industrialism burst forth in Europe and North America more than a hundred years earlier than it did in other parts of the globe and thus produced huge and sudden disparities in physical and administrative power. This called for a political response, and colonialism was this response. We Americans were spared a greater participation in it only because of our preoccupation with the development of our own continent—for no other reason.

Today the colonial relationship has outworn in many instances—though by no means all—its original technological and psychological justification. A great part of the colonial system has been liquidated, and another part of it is in course of liquidation. This process could not fail to give rise to tensions of tragic bitterness and difficulty. In the anatomy of these tensions, one will look in vain, as a rule, for any Christian meaning. The resistance to change on the part of the mother country has sometimes reflected selfishness and shortsightedness, and it has also reflected in many cases a genuine sense of responsibility. Conversely, the demand for change on the part of the colonial people has sometimes reflected a real love of liberty, and it has often been borne by a spirit fiercely chauvinistic, full of hatred, undemocratic, and irresponsible.

Let us, as Christians, view these resulting conflicts for what they are: tragic situations, in which the elements of right and wrong are indistinguishable to us. Let us remember that insofar as these situations reflect racial differences, we ourselves stand before God and the world as one of the most conspicuous examples of the failure to find a satisfactory Christian solution to such problems. Let us learn to view this whole subject of colonialism with humility, with detachment, with compassion for both sides. Let us not abuse the confidence of Christ by invoking his

judgment one way or another on situations that were obviously beyond the power of mortal man to prevent and are now beyond the power of mortal man to liquidate without pain and strife.

Or take the problems of technical assistance and other forms of aid to underdeveloped peoples. Here, too, I must argue against the absolutes. I can think of no question of Christian doctrine which needs critical examination more than the question of what constitutes charity. Even in the personal sense, in the relations between individuals, I often wonder whether we do not constantly misinterpret the term and whether it does not contain a host of subjective pitfalls. Charity is not giving people things which will only encourage them to postpone facing up to the necessities under which they are going to have to live in the long run. I question the handout as a means of bringing any important benefit to anyone, even in personal life. How much more complicated, then, is the matter of charity between nations. It is difficult to benefit a whole nation, as distinct from certain factions and elements in its competitive life, by anything you do to it from outside which affects its internal terms of competition. And make no mistake about it: every infusion of foreign aid has this effect. There are always some who benefit from it and others whose interests are damaged by it.

But beyond this, foreign aid, to be really effective as a gesture of Christian charity, would have to be understood as such a gesture by the recipients as well as by the donors. But most foreign peoples do not believe that governments do things for selfless and altruistic motives; and if we do not reveal to them a good solid motive of self-interest for anything we do with regard to them, they are apt to invent one. This can be a more sinister one than we ever dreamed of, and their belief in it can cause serious confusion in our mutual relations.

Foreign aid has a place in our foreign policy; but the favorable possibilities for it are more slender than people generally suppose. The less it consists of outright grants, the better. The less we try to clothe it in the trappings of disinterested altruism—to view it as Christian charity—the more we can show it as a rational extrapolation of our own national interest, the better understood and the more effective it is going to be abroad.

The sovereign national state, to which so much reverent devotion is paid in the various gradations of patriotism and chauvinism that make up national feelings, has no foundation in Christian principle, whatever its secular justification. Nowhere in Christ's teachings was it suggested that mankind ought to be divided into political families of this nature, each a law unto itself, each recognizing no higher authority than its own national ego, each assuming its interest to be more worthy of service than

any other with which it might come into conflict. Surely this whole theory is an absurdity from the Christian standpoint. Before we could achieve Christian foreign policy we would have to overcome this unlimited egotism of the sovereign national state and find a higher interest which all of us could recognize and serve.

How about the United Nations? it will be asked. Is this not an institution which, insofar as it represents an endeavor to transcend national sovereignty, deserves our support as a vehicle of the Christian purpose?

The UN represents not a supergovernment, not a separate institutional personality, but one of a number of forums on which governments communicate with one another. It does not, in reality, transcend the barrier of sovereignty. Its members are governments, not peoples, and such slender authority as it sometimes possesses is conferred upon it by these governments, each still acting within the sovereign framework.

There is no particular Christian sanctity lent to decisions taken in the United Nations by the fact that they represent the views of a majority of governments. Little countries are not necessarily more virtuous or more enlightened than big ones; and an international majority does not necessarily reflect the Christian answer, or even the most wise and courageous answer, to anything.

On the other hand, the UN does represent the germ of something immensely necessary and immensely hopeful for this endangered world: namely, a sense of conscience higher than the national one, a sense of the fellowship of fate by which we are all increasingly bound together. I cannot conceive of a satisfactory future for humanity that does not embrace, and draw its strength from, the growth of this consciousness. The present UN is the symbol of it. This symbol is still weak and tender, but it is not insignificant. We must therefore cherish it and guard it, not burdening it beyond its strength, not looking to it for the impossible, but strengthening it where and when we can, above all in our own thoughts and attitudes.

This does not mean that all UN decisions are to be taken as automatically right and good. It does not mean that all diplomatic questions should be uncritically consigned to the UN, whether or not this is a suitable place for their discussion. But it does mean that we should be careful and respectful of the organization as such, remembering that if the idea which it symbolizes is ever allowed to depart from international life, nothing else can stand between us and the horrors of a wholly chaotic world in the atomic age.

This brings me now to the questions on which I think a Christian might, with good conscience, really take a stand. They involve not just the national interests of individual governments but rather the interests

of civilization: the question of war, and the atom, and the other weapons of mass destruction.

I am aware that the institution of war has always represented dilemmas for Christian thought to which no fully satisfactory answer has ever been offered. I have, in the past, found myself unable to go along with the Quakers in their insistence on a sweeping renunciation of power as a factor in international affairs. I do not see the reality of so clear a distinction as they draw between domestic affairs and international affairs. The Communists have taught us that these two things are intimately connected, that civil wars have international implications and that international wars have domestic implications everywhere. I am unable therefore to accept the view which condemns coercion in the international sphere but tolerates it within the national borders.

But that we cannot rule out force completely in international affairs does not seem to me to constitute a reason for being indifferent to the ways in which force is applied—to the moral implications of weapons and their uses. It is true that all distinctions among weapons from the moral standpoint are relative and arbitrary. Gunpowder was once viewed with a horror not much less, I suppose, than are atomic explosives today. But who is to say that relative distinctions are not meaningful? I cannot help feeling that the weapon of indiscriminate mass destruction goes farther than anything the Christian ethic can properly accept. The older weapons, after all, were discriminate in the sense that they had at least a direct coherent relationship to political aims. They were seen as means of coercing people directly into doing things an enemy government wished them to do: evacuating territory, desisting from given objectives, accepting a given political authority. A distinction was still generally drawn, furthermore, prior to World War I at least, between the armed forces and the civilian population of a hostile country. Efforts were made to see that military action was directed only against those who themselves had weapons in their hands and offered resistance. The law of war did not yet permit the punishment of whole peoples as a means of blackmail against governments.

In all of these respects, the atom offends. So do all the other weapons of mass destruction. So, for that matter, did the conventional bomber of World War II when it was used for area bombing. In taking responsibility for such things as the bombing of Dresden and Hamburg, to say nothing of Nagasaki and Hiroshima, Americans went beyond what it seems to me the dictates of Christian conscience should have allowed (which is not to say that I think their problem was an easy one).

I regret, as an American and as a Christian, that these things were done. I think it should be our aim to do nothing of the sort in any future

military encounter. If we must defend our homes, let us defend them as well as we can in the direct sense, but let us have no part in making millions of women and children and noncombatants hostages for the behavior of their own governments.

It will be said to me: This means defeat. To this I can only reply: I am skeptical of the meaning of "victory" and "defeat" in their relation to modern war between great countries. To my mind the defeat is war itself. In any case it seems to me that there are times when we have no choice but to follow the dictates of our conscience, to throw ourselves on God's mercy, and not to ask too many questions.

But this is not the only moral connotation of the atom. There is another in the great controversy that has raged over the question of atomic testing, its effect on the atmosphere, and its consequences for human health. My colleagues in the scientific field advise me to stay away from this subject. They point out that there is a great deal about it which is not yet known; that scientists are themselves in wide disagreement about its seriousness; that I, as a scientific layman, would not even be able to understand the terms in which it is put. All this I readily concede; but even the little that is known to the general public is enough to pose a problem of Christian conscience.

Let us take a random sampling of recent press reports. During the first eight months of 1958, we are told, the fall-out of radioactive strontium on New York City increased by 25 per cent. Readings in Los Angeles are said by the health department of that city to have revealed for limited periods a count of five hundred to one thousand times the normal radioactivity in the atmosphere and double the intensity considered safe for continuous exposure over a lifetime. Only a few weeks ago observations in Sweden showed radioactivity at ten kilometers above sea level to be five times as intense as it was earlier in the year, and individual particles were detected (apparently at ground level), "larger and thought to be more radioactive, than any yet reported except from the immediate area of a test explosion." A similar report has come from Brazil.

All this is only the beginning; a large part of the fall-out from the tests conducted thus far is, we are told, still in the higher atmosphere and will not descend for years. Furthermore, the effect of radioactive substances on human health is cumulative, so that any unnatural exposure presumably reduces the tolerance of exposure from natural causes or for medical purposes.

In the face of these facts, I listen with some amazement to the statements with which some of the scientists endeavor to reassure us about such developments. The damages, they say, have been "negligible" so far. Not *many* deaths, they say, can be expected to ensue from this increase

in radioactivity compared with those which occur from natural causes. One scientist, pained and astounded at the concern about the radioactive particles in Sweden, explained that if, for example, 100 people would be killed by the effects of a normal atomic explosion, then only 102 could be expected to die from the effects of the increased radioactivity which Sweden has been experiencing.

But whoever gave us the right, as Christians, to take even one innocent human life, much less 102 or a 102,000? I recall no quantitative stipulation in the Sixth Commandment. God did not say through Moses that to take 102,000 lives was wicked but 102 was all right. I fail to see how any of this can be reconciled with the Christian conscience.

I am delighted that our government now shows a serious readiness to work toward the termination of these experiments with atomic explosives. We must go farther and work toward the elimination of the use of atomic weapons in war as well. This cannot be done in a day, and not all that needs to be done can be done by us. But we can at least make a beginning by endeavoring to free ourselves from our unwise dependence on atomic weapons in our own military calculations, from our fateful commitment to the first use of these weapons, whether or not they are used against us.

There is a principle involved here which has application beyond just the field of weapons, to a number of other effects in the introduction of modern technology. We of this generation are only the custodians, not the owners, of the earth on which we live. There were others who lived here before, and we hope there will be others who are going to live here afterward. We have an obligation to past generations and to future ones, no less solemn than our obligations to ourselves. I fail to see that we are in any way justified in making, for the safety or convenience of our own generation, alterations in our natural environment which may importantly change the conditions of life for those who come afterward.

The moral laws which we acknowledge predicate the existence of a certain sort of world—a certain sort of natural environment—in which people live. This setting presumably reflects God's purpose. We did not create it; we do not have the right to destroy it. We know the problems which this environment poses for man. We know the nature of the Christian effort to find answers to them. We live by this lore. When we permit this environment to be altered quite basically by things we do today, we are taking upon ourselves a responsibility for which I find no authority in the Christian faith.

Obviously, we do not know what the ultimate effects will be of the atomic weapons tests we have already conducted. I am not sure that we know what will be the ultimate effects of our methods of disposal of radioactive wastes. I doubt that we know what we are doing to the

sea through the use of modern detergents and the fouling of its surface with oil. I am not sure that we know what we are doing with modern insecticides, which we employ quite recklessly in agriculture for our immediate purposes, giving little thought to their ultimate effects. We who call ourselves Christians must acknowledge responsibility in these matters, most of which are international in their implications.

We will unavoidably find in the motives and workings of the political process much that is ambiguous in the Christian sense. In approaching the individual conflicts between governments which make up so much of international relations, we must beware of pouring Christian enthusiasm into unsuitable vessels which were at best designed to contain the earthy calculations of the practical politicians. But there are phases of the government's work into which we can look for Christian meaning. We can look for it, first of all, in the methods of our diplomacy, where decency and humanity of spirit can never fail to serve the Christian cause.

Beyond that there loom the truly apocalyptic dangers of our time, the ones that threaten to put an end to the very continuity of history outside which we would have no identity, no face, either in civilization, in culture, or in morals. These dangers represent for us not only political questions but stupendous moral problems, to which we cannot deny the courageous Christian answer. Here our main concern must be to see that man, whose own folly once drove him from the Garden of Eden, does not now commit the blasphemous act of destroying, whether in fear or in anger or in greed, the great and lovely world in which, even in his fallen state, he has been permitted by the grace of God to live.

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